

A
JOURNEY
FROM
BENGAL TO ENGLAND,
THROUGH
THE NORTHERN PART OF INDIA,
KASHMIRE, AFGHANISTAN, AND PERSIA, AND
INTO RUSSIA, BY THE CASPIAN-SEA.

BY GEORGE FORSTER.

IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF
THE HONOURABLE THE EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR R. FAULDER, NEW BOND-STREET.

1798.

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FORSTER'S TRAVELS.

LETTER XIII.

Kashmire, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

IT is now necessary to call your attention, already burthened, I fear, with no very pleasant matter, to the subject of Kashmire, and endeavour to describe the natural beauties of a valley, which perhaps, stands unparalleled for its air, soil, and a picturesque variety of landscape.

THE northern path of the Bannaul hill, mentioned in my last letter, is about one mile and a half shorter, than that of the southern side, not that this difference arises from the level of the low lands of Bannaul and Kashmire, but from the greater de-

clivity of the southern face of the hill. Yet it is evident, from the precipitated current of the rivers of this quarter of India, that the valley of Kashmire is considerably more elevated than the Punjab plains. This height of situation, surrounded also by mountains, whose lofty summits are covered with snow, during a great part of the year, imparts a coldness to the air of Kashmire, which its immediate line of latitude would not otherwise possess.

VEERE NAUG was the first village we halted at, within the valley, where our party was strictly examined, but from the respect shewn by all classes of people to Zulphucar Khan, we were permitted to pass untaxed and unmolested. A rare usage at a Kashmirian custom-house! It should have been before noticed, that our patron, from the lameness of his hand and a general infirm state of body, was obliged to travel in a litter; a species of carriage different from any seen in the southern quarters of India. The frame of four light pieces of wood, is about four feet and a half long, and three in breadth, with a bottom of cotton lacing or split canes interwoven. Two stout bamboo poles, project three feet, from the end of the frame and are fastened to its outward sides, by iron rings. The extremities of these bamboos are loosely connected by folds of cords, into which is fixed, by closely twisting and binding at the centre, a thick pole, three feet long; and by these central poles, the litter, or as it is here called, the Sampan, is supported on the shoulders of four men. This conveyance you will see affords no shelter against any inclemency

of

of weather, which is braved at all seasons by these men of the mountains.

In the passage of some of the steep hills the Khan was obliged to walk, and it seemed to me surprising, that the bearers were able to carry the litter over them. The Kashmirians, who are the ordinary travellers of this road, use sandals made of straw rope, as an approved defence of their feet, and to save their shoes. On leaving Sumboo, I had been advised to adopt this practice, but, my feet not being proof against the rough collision of the straw, I soon became lame and threw off my sandals. From a glaring deficiency of method, in the arrangement of my remarks, I am often fearful that but faint traces of a general chain will be exhibited. It is not that my ideas flow so thick and strong, as, in confidence of their superiour excellency, to condemn restriction or that obedience to order, which is so essential to their utility; it is an habit, perhaps an idle one, that impels me to note at the moment, the train of thoughts which occur; and it becomes necessary I see to plead this excuse, for having so abruptly dragged in the story of the khan's litter and my straw shoes, when I should have been laying before you sketches of this beautiful country, which, in the language of Persia, is called Kachmire be Nazeer.*

In the vicinity of Veere Naug is seen a torrent of water bursting from the side of a mountain with impetuous force, and imme-

* Unequalled.

diately forming a considerable stream, * which contributes, with numerous other rivulets, to fertilize the valley of Kashmire. On the spot, where this piece of water reaches the plain, a bason of a square form has been constructed, it is said, by the emperor Jehanguir, for receiving and discharging the current; and the trees of various kinds, which overspread the borders of the bason, at once give an ornament to the scene, and a grateful shade to the inhabitants of that quarter, who, in the summer season, make it a place of common resort.

The road from Veere Naug leads through a country, exhibiting that store of luxuriant imagery, which is produced by a happy disposition of hill, dale, wood and water; and, that these rare excellencies of nature might be displayed in their full glory, it was the season of spring, when the trees, the apple, pear, the peach, apricot, the cherry and mulberry bore a variegated load of blossom. The clusters also, of the red and white rose, with an infinite class of flowering shrubs, presented a view so gayly decked, that no extraordinary warmth of imagination, was required to fancy that I stood, at least, on a province of fairy land. Except the mulberry, I do not believe that this country produces any species of the fruits of India, and but few of its vegetables; such is the change effected within a space of two degrees of latitude: this sudden revolution of climate cannot be

* It is called Vheit or Behat in the Kashmirian language, and in the Sanscrit, Vetustah.

ascribed to the northern situation of Kashmire, which is little more than two hundred miles from Lahore, where, many of the fruits of southern India come to maturity, but to the surrounding snowy mountains, and an highly elevated land; which the Hindoos say, though very widely, is three perpendicular miles higher than the Punjab.

On the 26th of April, at Durroo or Lurroo, a small but very populous town, seven cosses from Bannaul, where our khan and his suite were hospitably received by the chief, and lodged that night at his house. Our entertainment, and the cordial behaviour of the host, made us a general recompence for the fatigues of the journey; and I in an instant, forgot the pains of my bruised feet, in the pleasant comparison between a commodious shelter and the boisterous weather of the mountains.

On the 27th, at Islaamabad, five cosses — a large town, situate on the north side of the river Jalum, which is here springing from the mountains, or penetrating them in narrow openings. At this place the Jalum, over which a wooden bridge is built, is about eighty yards across, and from the level surface of the country has a gentle current. Our party, this evening, hired a boat to proceed to the city, and had gone more than five miles, when a written order arrived, in an evil hour, requiring us to return and remain at Islaamabad, until a passport should be obtained from the court. This check infused a general gloom, and rendered our situation, already confined and irksome, almost comfortless. The boat, a very small one,

one, was scantily covered with a slender mat, and the wind, current, and a heavy rain had set in against us. The rain continued incessantly the whole night, and though my bedding was drenched with water, I received no injury from having lain on it several hours. After expressing my grateful acknowledgements to a hale constitution, I am induced to ascribe a great share of the prevention of sickness, on this as on other occasions to the frequent use of tobacco, which manifestly possesses the property of defending the body against the impression of damps and cold or impure air, which, from the thick ranges of wood and hills, is tainted with noxious vapours, produces fevers of a malignant kind, and I am prompted to attribute the good health I enjoyed in those parts, to the common habit of smoking tobacco.

Our party was greatly surprized at the receipt of this very unreasonable mandate, as we had during the day, occupied one of the most public places of the town, where most of the principal people visited Zulphucar Khan, supplied him with provisions, and were apprized of his intention to depart in the evening. But it had been issued I believe by the governor of the town, in resentment of the khan's not visiting him; and operated with a quick force, on the minds of all the men, and even the children of Islaamabad, who, but the short day before, from treating us with a studied kindness, would now pass our quarters without a notice. In every region of the earth, the loss of power, nay the trivial crosses of life, too often cause the desertion of those, whom the language of the world has

has entitled friends, but the averted looks of the prince are ever faithfully copied by the courtiers. The disgraced courtier of Asia, or he against whom the frown of the despot shall be pointed, becomes immediatly infected, and all men, by intuitive knowledge, it should seem, shun him. A retreat is rarely made by an Asiatic statesman, who usually closes his political career in a dungeon or on a scaffold.

IN Asia, the principles of justice, honor or patriotism, as they confer no substantial benefit, nor tend to elevate the character, are seldom seen to actuate the mind of the subject, who is constitutionally led to fix the tenure of life and property, and fame, on the will of his prince. Zulphucar Khan informs me, that the chief of Kashmire, though a youth, stands in the foremost rank of tyrants, and that the exactions of a Hindoo custom-house will be soon forgotten in the oppression of his government. The one, he said, affects a trifling portion of property, the other involves fortune and life.

Two or three days after our arrival at Islaamabad, the Dewan, or principal officer of the governor of Kashmire encamped in our vicinity, and being acquainted with Zulphucar Khan, obtained permission for the procedure of our party to the city. It is here necessary to observe, that no person, except by stealth, can enter or depart from Kashmire without an order, marked with the seal of government. The Dewan, attracted I suppose by the appearance of so white a person, made some enquiry into the nature of my occupation

pation and views. I told the old story of a turk travelling towards his country, with the addition, that to avoid the Sicque territory, I had taken the route of Kashmire, where I hoped to experience the benefit of his protection. My story was favourably heard, and I received a very cordial assurance of every necessary assistance. Our party being directed to attend the Dewan, and to form a part of his domestic suite, we proceeded by water, on the afternoon of the 3d of May, to Bhyteepour, nine cosses, a village situate on the northern bank of the Jalum, the evening was serene, and the variegated view of populous villages, interspersed through a plain which was waving with a rich harvest, and enlivened by the notes of a thousand birds, filled the mind with harmony and delight.

In the vicinity of Bhyteepour are seen the remains of an Hindoo temple, which, though impaired by the ravages of time, and more by the destructive hand of the Mahometans, still bore evident marks of a superior taste and sculpture. Kashmire, having fallen a conquest to the followers of Mahomet, at an early period of their empire in India, when they furiously broke down every fence that barred the progress of their religion, felt the full force of a barbarous zeal; and its monuments of worship and taste were thrown to the ground in shapeless piles of ruin.

THE Dewan taking Zulphucar Khan with him, went, on the 5th of the month into the interior part of the country, and directed me to wait for him at the town of Pamper, ten miles further down the

the river, where an order was sent for my accommodation. This person of the Hindoo sect, possessed a more liberal disposition than is usually found in an Indian: though perhaps I am so much biassed by his indulgent treatment, that my opinion may be thought partial, but his deportment seemed uniformly benevolent to all classes of people; with his companions he was affable and good humoured, he was humane to his domestics, and he exercised with a reasonable temperance the duties of his office.

On the 7th, the Dewan came to Pamper, whence I went to the city, a distance of seven cosses in his boat, which, though in Kashmire was thought magnificent, would not have been disgraced in the station of a kitchen tender to a Bengal badgero. The boats of Kashmire are long and narrow, and are rowed with paddles: from the stern, which is a little elevated, to the centre, a tilt of mats is extended for the shelter of passengers or merchandize. The country being intersected with numerous streams, navigable for small vessels, great advantage and conveniency would arise to it from the water conveyance, especially in its interior commerce, did not the miserable policy of the Afghan government crush the spirit of the people.

THE city, which in the ancient annals of India was known by the name of Siringnaghur, but now by that of the province at large, extends about three miles on each side of the river Jalum, over which are four or five wooden bridges, and occupies

in some part of its breadth, which is irregular, about two miles. The houses, many of them two and three stories high, are slightly built of brick and mortar, with a large intermixture of timber. On a standing roof of wood is laid a covering of fine earth, which shelters the building from the great quantity of snow that falls in the winter season. This fence communicates an equal warmth in winter, as a refreshing coolness in the summer season, when the tops of the houses, which are planted with a variety of flowers, exhibit at a distance the spacious view of a beautifully checquered parterre. The streets are narrow, and choaked with the filth of the inhabitants, who are proverbially unclean. No buildings are seen in this city worthy of remark; though the Kashmirians boast much of a wooden mosque, called the Jumah Muffid,* erected by one of the emperors of Hindostan; but its claim to distinction is very moderate.

THE subahdar, or governor of Kashmire, resides in a fortress called Shere Ghur, occupying the south-east quarter of the city, where most of his officers and troops are also quartered.

THE benefits which this city enjoys of a mild salubrious air, a river flowing through its centre, of many large and commodious houses, are essentially alloyed by its confined construction and the extreme filthiness of the people. The covered floating baths,

* Jumah is the sabbath of the Mahometans, and Muffid the name of a public place of worship. In pre-eminence, the principal place of prayer in Mahometan cities is termed Jumah Muffid.

which

which are ranged along the sides of the river, give the only testimony of conveniency or order; such baths are much wanted by the Indian Mahometans, who from the climate and their religion, are obliged to make frequent ablutions, and, in preventing the exposure of their women on these occasions, to adopt laborious precautions.

THE lake of Kashmire, or in the provincial language, the Dall, long celebrated for its beauties, and the pleasure it affords to the inhabitants of this country, extends from the north-east quarter of the city, in an oval circumference of five or six miles, and joins the Jalum by a narrow channel, near the suburbs. On the entrance to the eastward is seen a detached hill, on which some devout Mahometan has dedicated a temple to the great king Solomon, whose memory in Kashmire is held in profound veneration.

THE legends of the country assert, that Solomon visited this valley, and finding it covered, except the eminence now mentioned with a noxious water, which had no outlet, he opened a passage in the mountains, and gave to Kashmire its beautiful plains. The Tucht Suliman, the name bestowed by the Mahometans on the hill, forms one side of a grand portal to the lake, and on the other stands a lower hill, which, in the Hinduee is called Hirney Purvet, or the green hill, a name probably adopted from its being covered with gardens and orchards.

ON the summit of the Hirney Purvet, the Kashmirians have

erected a mosque to the honor of a Muckdoom Saheb, who is as famous in their tales, as Thomas-a-Becket in those of Canterbury. The men never undertake a business of moment without consulting Muckdoom Saheb; and when a Kashmirian woman wants a handsome husband or a chopping boy, she addresses her prayer to the ministers of this saint, who are said to seldom fail in gratifying her wish. The northern view of the lake is terminated at the distance of twelve miles, by a detached range of mountains, which slope from the centre to each angle; and from the base, a spacious plain, preserved in constant verdure by numerous streams, extends with an easy declivity to the margin of the water.

In the centre of the plain, as it approaches the lake, one of the Dehli emperors, I believe Shah Jehan, constructed a spacious garden, called the Shalimar, which is abundantly stored with fruit-trees and flowering shrubs. Some of the rivulets which intersect the plain, are led into a canal at the back of the garden, and flowing through its centre, or occasionally thrown into a variety of water-works, compose the chief beauty of the Shalimar. To decorate this spot, the Mogul princes of India have displayed an equal magnificence and taste; especially Jehan Gheer, who, with the enchanting Noor Mahl, made Kashmire his usual residence during the summer months, and largely contributed to improve its natural advantages. On arches thrown over the canal, are erected at equal distances, four or five suites of apartments, each consisting of a saloon, with four rooms at the angles, where

where the followers of the court attend, and the servants prepare sherbets, coffee, and the Hookah. The frame of the doors of the principal saloon, is composed of pieces of a stone of a black colour, streaked with yellow lines, and of a closer grain and higher polish than porphyry. They were taken, it is said, from an Hindoo temple, by one of the Mogul princes, and esteemed of great value.

THE canal of the Shalimar is constructed of masonry as far as the lower pavillion, from whence the stream is conveyed through a bed of earth, in the centre of an avenue of spreading trees, to the lake, which, with other streams of a lesser note, it supplies and refreshes. The other sides of the lake are occupied by gardens of an inferior description; though two of them, the property of the government, deserve a distinct notice for their size and pleasant appearance; the Baugh Nussseem lying on the north-west, and the Baugh Nisbat on the south-east quarter of the Shalimar. The numerous small islands emerging from the lake, have also a happy effect in ornamenting the scene. One of a square form is called the Char Chinaur,* from having at each of the angles a plane-tree; but one of them, and a pavillion that was erected in the centre, has gone to decay, as have all their monuments of the Moguls, except the Shalimar, which is preserved in good order, and is often visited by the governor, whom I have seen there, with

* The oriental plane.

his officers and the principal inhabitants of the city. Since the dismemberment of Kashmire from the empire of Hindostan, it has been subject to the Afghans,* who possessing neither the genius nor liberality of the Moguls, have suffered its elegant structures to crumble into ruins, and to hold out against them a severe testimony of the barbarity of their nation.

AMIR KHAN, a Persian, one of the late governors of Kashmire, erected a fortified palace on the eastern side of the lake; but the materials have been so unsubstantial, that though of not more than eight years standing, it cannot now with safety be inhabited. He used to pass much of his time in this retreat, which was curiously adapted to the enjoyment of the various species of Asiatic luxury; and he is still spoken of in terms of affection and regret; for, like them, he was gay, voluptuous, and much addicted to the pleasures of the table. There is not a boatman or his wife that does not speak of this Khan with rapture, and ascribe to him a once abundant livelihood. This governor like many of his predecessors, trusting in the natural strength of the province, and its distance from the capital, rebelled against his master.† The force sent against him was small and ill appointed, and might have been easily repelled by a few resolute men stationed in the passes. But in the hour of need, he was abandoned by

* This event probably happened about the year 1754.

† Timur Shah, the reigning emperor of the Afghans.

the pusillanimous fickle Kashmirians, who reconciled their conduct to the Persian, by urging, that if he had remained in Kashmire, he would have converted them all to the faith of Ali and cut them off from the hope of salvation. A Kashmirian must have been grievously embarrassed to justify his conduct, when he ascribed it to any principle of religion; for he is a Hindoo, a Mahometan, and would become a Christian if a priest were at hand, according to the fashion or interest of the day.

THE environs of the town, to the east and west, are laid out in private gardens, which, skirting the banks of the Jalum, or supplied with canals from the lake, afford a various retreat of pleasure to the inhabitants. The plane-tree, that species termed the *Platanus Orientalis*, is commonly cultivated in Kashmire, where it is said to arrive at a greater perfection than in other countries. This tree, which in most parts of Asia is called the Chinaur, grows to the size of an oak, and has a taper straight trunk, with a silver coloured bark; and its leaf, not unlike an expanded hand, is of a pale green. When in full foliage, it has a grand and beautiful appearance, and in the hot weather, it affords a refreshing shade. But I may venture to class in the first rank of vegetable produce, the rose of Kashmire, which, for its brilliancy and delicate of odour, has long been proverbial in the east; and its essential oil or ottar is held in universal estimation. The season, when the rose first opens into blossom, is celebrated with much festivity by the

the Kashmirians, who resort in crowds to the adjacent gardens, and enter into scenes of gaiety and pleasure, rarely known among other Asiatic nations. There, all that exterior gravity which constitutes a grand part of the Mahometan character, is thrown aside; and the Turk, Arab, and Persian, as if fatigued with exhibiting the serious and guarded deportment of their own country, give a licentious scope to their passions.

THE valley of Kashmire is of an elliptick form, and extends about ninety miles in a winding direction from the south-east to the north-west. It widens gradually to Islaamabad, where the breadth is about forty miles, which is continued with little variation to the town of Sampre,* whence the mountains by a regular inclination to the westward, come to a point, and divide Kashmire from the territory of Muzzufferabad. To the north and north-east, Kashmire is bounded by what is here termed the mountains of Thibet; a branch, I apprehend, of that immense range, which rising near the black sea, penetrates through Armenia, and skirting the south shore of the Caspian, extends through the north-east provinces of Persia, to Thibet and China. On the south-east and south, it is bounded by Kishtewar, and on the south-west and west, by Prounce,† Muzzufferabad and some other independent districts.

* About twenty-five miles to the westward of the city.

† Through this district lies the pass of Bember, minutely described by Bernier.

THE Jalum, the western of the Punjab rivers, having received the numerous rivulets of the valley, and the overflowing water of the lakes, becomes a spacious stream, and is discharged through the mountains near the town of Baramoulah, where its current, from the declivity of the land, runs with rapid force.* At Baramoulah the Kashmirians say Solomon rent the mountains, and gave a passage to the waters, which, from the beginning of time had floated on their plains.

ABOUT eight miles to the westward of the city, the Jalum is joined by a small river called the Chote, or little Scind, which I was informed by a Kashmirian Pundit, arises in the Thibet mountains, and is the only stream not produced within the valley. Previously to the Mahometan conquest of India, Kashmire was celebrated for the learning of its Bramins and the magnificent construction of its temple. The period of its subjection to the Mahometans, is not recorded in any history that I have seen, but we may believe, that a country, containing a valuable commerce and a profusion of natural beauties, would at an early date have attracted their notice and invited their conquest. It was governed in a long series of succession, by a race of Tartar princes, of the Chug or Chugatay tribe, until the year 1586, when Acbar subdued it: aided more, it is said, by intrigue, than the force of his arms. Kashmire remained annexed to the house of Timur for

* See Bernier.

the space of one hundred and sixty years, after which it was betrayed by the Mogul governor, to Ahmed Shah Duranny, who formed it into a province of the Afghan empire.

THE valley of Kashmire has generally a flat surface, and being copiously watered, yields abundant crops of rice, which is the common food of the inhabitants. At the base of the surrounding hills, where the land is higher, wheat, barley and various other grains are cultivated. A superior species of saffron is also produced in this province, and iron of an excellent quality is found in the adjacent mountains. But the wealth and fame of Kashmire have largely arisen from the manufacture of shauls, which it holds unrivalled, and almost without participation. The wool of the shaul is not produced in the country, but brought from districts of Thibet, lying at the distance of a month's journey to the north-east. It is originally of a dark grey colour, and is bleached in Kashmire by the help of a certain preparation of rice flour. The yarn of this wool is stained with such colours as may be judged the best suited for sale, and after being woven the piece is once washed. The border, which usually displays a variety of figures and colours is attached to the shauls, after fabrication; but in so nice a manner, that the junction is not discernable. The texture of the shaul resembles that of the shaloon of Europe, to which it has probably communicated the name. The price, at the loom, of an ordinary shaul, is eight rupees, thence in proportional quality, it produces from fifteen to twenty; and I have seen a very fine

fine piece sold at forty rupees the first cost. But the value of this commodity may be largely enhanced by the introduction of flowered work; and when you are informed that the sum of one hundred rupees is occasionally given for a shawl to the weaver, the half amount may be fairly ascribed to the ornaments.

A PORTION of the revenue of Kashmire is transmitted to the Afghan capital in shawl goods, which I had an opportunity of seeing previously to the dispatch, and from the information then received, I am reasonably confirmed in the accuracy of this statement I have given. The shawls usually consist of three sizes, two of which, the long and the small square one, are in common use in India; the other long and very narrow, with a large mixture of black colour in it, is worn as a girdle by the northern Asiatics.

A WINE is made in Kashmire, resembling that of Madeira, which, if skilfully manufactured by age, would possess an excellent quality. A spirituous liquor is also distilled from the grape, in which and the wine, the people of all kinds freely indulge.

THE Kashmirians fabricate the best writing paper of the east, which was formerly an article of extensive traffic; as were its lacquer ware, cutlery and sugars;* and the quality of these manufactures clearly evince, that were the inhabitants governed by wise and liberal princes, there are few attainments of art which they

* The raw sugar is imported from the Punjab.

would not acquire. But the heavy oppressions of the government, and the rapacious temper of the bordering states, who exercise an unremitting rapacity on the foreign traders, and often plunder whole cargoes, have reduced the commerce of Kashmire to a declining and languid state. In proof of this position, the Kashmirians say, that during their subjection to the Mogul dominion, the province contained forty thousand shawl looms, and that at this day, there are not sixteen thousand. In Kashmire are seen merchants and commercial agents of most of the principal cities of northern India, also of Tartary, Persia and Turkey, who at the same time advance their fortunes, and enjoy the pleasures of a fine climate and a country, over which are profusely spread the various beauties of nature.

THE dress of the Kashmirians consists of a large turban, awkwardly put on ; a great woollen vest with wide sleeves ; and a sack, wrapped in many folds round the middle ; under the vest, which may be properly called a wrapper, the higher class of people wear a pirahun or shirt, and drawers ; but the lower order have no under garment, nor do they even gird up their loins. On first seeing these people in their own country, I imagined from their garb, the cast of countenance, which is long and of a grave aspect, and the form of their beards, that I had come amongst a nation of Jews. The same idea impressed also Mr. Bernier, who carrying it further, has attempted, by the aid of some proofs more specious than substantial, to deduce their
origin

origin from the Jewish tribes that were carried into captivity.

THE dress of the women is no less awkward than that of the men, and is ill adapted to display the beauties they naturally possess. Their outward, and often only garment is of cotton, and shaped like a long loose shirt. Over the hair, which falls in a single braid, they wear a close cap, usually of a woollen cloth of a crimson colour; and to the hinder part of it is attached a triangular piece of the same stuff, which falling on the back conceals much of the hair. Around the lower edge of the cap is rolled a small turban, fastened behind with a short knot, which seemed to me the only artificial ornament about them. You will be pleased to notice, that I speak of the dress of the ordinary women, such only being permitted to appear in public. The women of the higher classes are never seen abroad; nor is it consistent with the usage of any Mahometan nation even to speak of the female part of a family.

THE Kashmirians are stout, well formed, and as the natives of a country lying in the thirty-fourth degree of latitude, may be termed a fair people, and their women in southern France or Spain would be called Brunettes. But having been prepossessed with an opinion of their charms, I suffered a sensible disappointment; though I saw some of the female dancers most celebrated for beauty and the attractions of their profession. A coarseness of figure generally prevails among them, with broad features, and they too often have thick legs. Though excelling in the colour of their

com-

complexion, they are evidently surpassed by the elegant form and pleasing countenance of the women of some of the western provinces of India.

THE city of Kashmire once abounded with courtezans, equally gay and affluent; but the rigorous contributions of the Afghans have greatly reduced their number, and driven most of those that remain into a languid poverty. The few that I saw, afforded me much pleasure by their graceful skill in dancing, and voices peculiarly melodious. And here let me observe, lest I should afterwards forget, that the women of Kashmire are singularly fruitful, be the government ever so oppressive, or fortune at all points adverse, no baneful effects are seen to operate on the propagation of the species, which is maintained with a successful perseverance. I will not presume to investigate the physical cause of a virtue so copiously inherent in the men and women of this country, but will simply intimate to you that its waters are well stored with fish, which is thought to be a generative stimulus, and constitutes a principal article of the food of the people.

THE language of Kashmire evidently springs from the Sanscrit stock, and resembles in sound, that of the Mahrattas, though with more harshness, which has probably induced the inhabitants to compose their songs in the Persic, or adopt those of the Persian poets. Yet in despite of the unpleasant tone of their speech, there is scarcely a person in the country, from youth to old age, who has not a taste for music.

THE

THE Kashmirians are gay and lively people, with strong propensities to pleasure. None are more eager in the pursuit of wealth, have more inventive faculties in acquiring it, or who devise more modes of luxurious expense. When a Kashmirian, even of the lowest order, finds himself in the possession of ten shillings, he loses no time in assembling his party, and launching into the lake, solaces himself till the last farthing is spent. Nor can the despotism of an Afghan government, which loads them with a various oppression and cruelty, eradicate this strong tendency to dissipation, yet their manners, it is said, have undergone a manifest change, since the dismemberment of their country from Hindostan. Encouraged by the liberality and indulgence of the Moguls, they gave a loose to their pleasures and the bent of their genius. They appeared in gay apparel, constructed costly buildings, and were much addicted to the pleasures of the table. The interests of this province were so strongly favored at the court, that every complaint against its governors was attentively listened to, and any attempt to molest the people, restrained or punished.

In the reign of Aurungzebe, when the revenue of the different portions of the empire exceeded that of the present day, the sum collected in Kashmire amounted to three and a half lacks of rupees, but at this time, not less than twenty lacks are extracted by the Afghan governor, who, if his tribute be regularly remitted to court, is allowed to execute with impunity every act of violence. This extreme rigour has sensibly affected the deportment and manners

ners of the Kashmirians, who shrink with dread from the Afghan oppressions, and are fearful of making any display of opulence. A Georgian merchant, who had long resided in the country, gave me the most satisfactory information of Kashmire. He said, that when he first visited the province, which was governed by a person of a moderate disposition, the people were licentious, volatile and profuse. But, that since the administration of the late chief, an Afghan of a fierce and rapacious temper, they had become dispirited, their way of living mean, their dress slovenly, and though of a temper proverbially loquacious, they were averse from communicating ordinary intelligence.

DURING my residence in Kashmire, I often witnessed the harsh treatment which the common people received at the hands of their masters, who rarely issued an order without a blow of the side of their hatchet, a common weapon of the Afghans, and used by them in war, as a battle-axe. Though the inhabitants of this province are held under a grievous subjection, and endure evils the most mortifying to human nature, being equally oppressed and insulted, the various testimonies brought home to me of their common depravity of disposition, made me the less sensible of their distress; and in a short time so faint was the trace of it on my mind, that I even judged them worthy of their adverse fortune.

In viewing the manners of a people at large, it were at once a sacrifice of truth and every claim to historical merit, to introduce
passionate

passionate or fanciful colouring; yet the coolest reflection does not withhold me from saying, that I never knew a national body of men more impregnated with the principles of vice, than the natives of Kashmire. The character of a Kashmirian is conspicuously seen, when invested with official power. Supported by an authority which prescribes no limits to its agents, in the accumulation of public emoluments, the Kashmirian displays the genuine composition of his mind. He becomes intent on immediate aggrandizement, without rejecting any instrument which can promote his purpose. Rapacious and arrogant, he evinces in all his actions, deceit, treachery, and that species of refined cruelty, which usually actuates the conduct of a coward. And it is said, that he is equally fickle in his connections, as implacable in enmity. In behalf of humanity, I could wish not to have been capacitated to exhibit so disgusting a picture, which being constantly held out to me for near three months, in various lights, but with little relief, impressed me with a general dislike of mankind.

THE Kashmirians are so whimsically curious, that when any trivial question is proposed to them, its intention and purpose is enquired into with a string of futile interrogatories, before the necessary information is given; and a shopkeeper rarely acknowledges the possession of a commodity, until he is apprized of the quantity required. In examining the situation in which these people have been placed, with its train of relative effects, the speculative moralist will perhaps discover one of the larger sources,

from whence this cast of manners and disposition has arisen. He will perceive that the singular position of their country, its abundant and valuable produce, with a happy climate, tend to excite strong inclinations to luxury and effeminate pleasures; and he is aware, that to counteract causes, naturally tending to enervate and corrupt the mind, a system of religion or morality is necessary to inculcate the love of virtue, and especially, to impress the youth with early sentiments of justice and humanity. But he will evidently see, that neither the religious or the moral precepts of the present race of Mahometans contain the principles of rectitude or philanthropy; that on the contrary, they are taught to look with abhorrence on the fairest portion of the globe, and to persecute and injure those who are not inclosed in the fold of their prophet. Seeing then the Kashmirians, presiding as it were at the fountain head of pleasure, neither guided or checked by any principle or example of virtue, he will not be surprized, that they give a wide scope to the passions of the mind and the enjoyments of the body.

AZAD KHAN, the present governor of Kashmire, of the Afghan tribe, succeeded his father Hadji * Kareem Dad, a domestic officer of Ahmed Shah Duranny, and who was, at the death of that prince, advanced to the government of Kashmire, by Timur Shah, as a reward for quelling the rebellion of the Amir Khan,

* Those who have made the pilgrimage of Mecca are termed Hadji.

who

who has been already mentioned. Though the Kashmirians exclaim with bitterness at the administration of Hadji Kareem Dad, who was notorious for his wanton cruelties and insatiable avarice; often for trivial offences, throwing the inhabitants, tyed by the back in pairs, into the river, plundering their property, and forcing their women of every description; yet they say, he was a systematic tyrant, and attained his purposes, however atrocious, through a fixed medium. They hold a different language in speaking of the son, whom they denominate the Zaulim Kham, a Persian phrase which expresses a tyrant without discernment; and if the smaller portion of the charges against him are true, the appellation is fitly bestowed. At the age of eighteen years; he has few of the vices of youth; he is not addicted to the pleasures of the haram, nor to wine: he does not even smoke the Hookah. But his acts of ferocity exceed common belief; they would seem to originate in the wildest caprice, and to display a temper rarely seen in the nature of man.

THAT you may form some specific knowledge of the character of this, let me call him, infernal despot, I will mention some facts which were communicated during my residence in the province. While he was passing with his court, under one of the wooden bridges of the city, on which a crowd of people had assembled to observe the procession, he levelled his musquet at an opening which he saw in the path way, and being an expert marksman, he shot to death an unfortunate spectator. Soon after his accession to the

government, he accused his mother of infidelity to her husband, and in defiance of the glaring absurdity which appeared in the allegation, as well as the anxious intreaties of the woman who had borne him to save her from shame, she was ignominiously driven from the palace; and about the same time, on a like frivolous pretence, he put one of his wives to death. A film on one of his eyes had baffled the attempts of many operators, and being impatient at the want of success, he told the last surgeon who had been called in, that if the disorder was not remedied within a limited time, allowing but a few days, his belly should be cut open; the man failed in the cure, and Azad Khan verified his threat.

THESE passages were related to me by different persons, some strangers in the country, others, who from the stations they held, would rather have been induced to speak favourably. Azad Khan had, in the three first months of his government, become an object of such terror to the Kashmirians, that the casual mention of his name produced an instant horror and an involuntary supplication of the aid of their prophet. Among the lesser order of his exactions, but which seemed to me the most unpopular and discouraging, is that levied from the courtezans or dancing girls, who are obliged to account for every sum of money they receive, and to pay the larger share of it to the intendant of the police; nor are they allowed to attend at any festival or entertainment, without the permission of that officer.

officer. The rigorous treatment of this class of females, which are ever the most pleasing to society from the indulgence granted to them, has here effected a grievous change; for though Kashmire is known to abound in fine women, few are now seen among the courtezans.

A REVENUE of between twenty and thirty lacks of rupees is collected from this province, of which a tribute of seven lacks is remitted to the treasury of Timur Shah. The army of Kashmire, a part of which I have seen embodied, consists of about three thousand horse and foot, chiefly Afghans,* who had received little pay for two years, and many of them, for want of a better subsistence, were obliged to live on the Kernel of the Singerah,† or water-nut, which is plentifully produced in the lakes of the country.

IN noticing the character of the governor of Kashmire, which is composed of little else than a blind destructive cruelty, you

* The natives of this province are rarely seen engaged in a military occupation, from which their genius seems averse; and it is held an established rule in the Afghan government, to refuse the admittance of a Kashmirian into their army. The common people usually carry abroad with them in the winter season an earthen stove, which hanging near the thigh, gives it a scorched appearance; and by this mark a Kashmirian is discovered, should he by stealth endeavour to enlist. The sling, in the use of which they are expert, seems to be their favourite weapon, and enables them with little variation to oppose an adversary at a distance, and from places of security.

† The Singerah also constitutes a great portion of the food of the lower class of the natives, and the exclusive privilege of vending it, yields annually about twelve thousand pounds to the government.

will be surprized that he is not punished or restrained by the court. But when it is considered that the approach to this remote province, leads through hostile or independant territories, that Timur Shah is equally withheld from distant enterprize by the accumulated arrears and consequent weakness of his army, to which may be added the fear of domestic treason, and a native indolence of temper, a sufficient cause will be seen for his passive regard to the interior government of Kashmire. Contenting himself with the tribute, he is seldom disposed to controul the conduct of a remote governor. I am to express a regret, that previously to my route, I had not perused the accurate and candid memoirs of Mr. Bernier, who stands in the first rank of writers on Indian history: yet, should this cursory relation throw any light on his description of Kashmire, as lively as it is just, by filling up a chasm, or marking the changes which have happened since his day, I shall hold it in some estimation, and consider any inconveniency which might have arisen from my journey thither, honorably requited. Mr. Bernier enjoyed advantages which have fallen to the lot of few Asiatic travellers, and fortunately for the learned world, his talents amply improved them. He travelled into Kashmire in the suite of Danishmund Khan, a favourite Omrah of Aurungzebe, who having a taste for science and letters, encouraged this ingenious Frenchman to attentively investigate the great variety of its curious produce. He has also described the causes of that important revolution, which raised Aurungzebe to the throne of Hindostan.

As

As he was personally engaged in the scene of action, and an eye witness of many of the principal events, all which are related in a simple interesting language, I earnestly recommend to you a diligent perusal of his instructive and judicious book. This writer having chiefly associated with Mahometans, who invariably possess an absolute abhorrence of the religion of the Hindoos, and being destitute of the proper documents for the research, he has not been equally successful in his explanation of the principles and spirit of the Hindoo doctrines, and it is only in that discussion I presume to doubt the opinions of Mr. Bernier. After closing this dissertation on Kashmire, you must permit me to relate my desultory adventures in that country.

On my arrival at the city, I was accommodated with an apartment in the house of Zulphucar Khan, and seeing him of so respectable a character, and disposed to do me kindness, I had resolved to remain there, but my servant, the same person who had set upon me at Jumbo, discovered me to the family to whom he knew I had brought introductory letters, and being urgently pressed, not to say pestered, to lodge at the house of a Sheikh Mirza, the brother of my Jumbo host, I was forced out of the friendly roof of the Khan, whom I shall ever remember with affection and esteem. His father having filled high stations in the upper part of India, at the period of the Afghan and Sicque invasions, Zulphucar Khan, who was himself present at some of the actions, had acquired a conversant knowledge of the motives that
actuated

actuated the different parties; and his remarks on the various events of those times, from which I derived much useful information, denoted a sound discerning judgement, little heated by prejudice, or fettered by those narrow precepts which usually sway the mind of a Mahometan. He strictly observed the ceremonies of his religion, which were performed with an apparent conviction of their rectitude; and, though he daily saw my remission of the customary worship of his family, he neither remarked or censured it.

AT Sheich Mirza's, I was received with splendid offers of friendship, and all that farrago of protestation, the common burthen of Asiatic language, which goes for nothing. The truth was, the brother at Jumbo had represented me as a wealthy merchant who would produce great profit to the house; and this object deluged me at the first meeting with compliments, which commenced with embracing my legs, and ended in washing my beard in rose water. Nor did he cease to load me with a series of disgusting attentions, until I told him that my business obliged me to proceed, without delay, to Kabul. The arrival of a merchant from Constantinople compleated my relief; for then the Sheick had no leisure to say a civil word to any one, and seeing indeed, that my residence promised no emolument to the house, he would without ceremony have turned me out of it, had another Turk appeared.

As there are no karavanferas in Kashmire, commercial strangers

gers are lodged with their brokers, who finding an account in affording such accommodation, are generally possessed of large and convenient habitations. A Georgian, who occupied the room next to mine, and was a very agreeable neighbour, did not, I observed, give a ready credit to my story, which he cross examined with some tokens of suspicion; and one day, having desired to look at my head, he decidedly, pronounced it to be that of a christian. But he became alarmed, when I cautioned him, in a serious tone, to be less hasty in forming so dangerous an opinion; for he must know, that to bestow such an appellation * on a believer of the true faith, was a grievous offence in a Mahometan country. In a future conversation with the Georgian, he explained to me, and proved by comparison, that the head of a Christian is broad behind and flatted out at the crown; that a Mahometan's head grows narrow at the top, and like a monkies has a conic form. This Georgian was associated in trade with one of his countrymen then residing at Benares, and seeing that he viewed me with mistrust, the communication of which must have had mischievous effects, I judged it prudent to disclose my true story; premising, with an assurance, that should treachery or his indiscretion bring on me any mischance, his estate at Benares would become forfeit, and the person of his companion exposed to punishment. This

* Nazarene is a term of bitter reproach among the northern Mahometans.

language, supported by a disposition naturally honourable, ensured his zealous attachment, from which I derived many uses, during my stay in Kashmire.

THE Dewan, whom I daily attended, still continued his former kindness, and agreeably to his promise, solicited for me the governor's permission to leave the province. The memorial presented by the Dewan, set forth, that a Turk who had come from Hindostan, was desirous of passing, with two domestics, through Kashmire, in his way to Constantinople. When this purport was made known to me, I strongly feared its failure; for strangers rarely visit Kashmire for the purpose of curiosity or amusement, and as no specific occupation was ascribed to me, I observed to the Dewan that a refusal might be expected. The apprehension was wholly verified in Azad Khan's saying, that the Turks were good soldiers, which he then wanted, and that he would employ me in his army. It was in vain the Dewan represented the solicitude of visiting my country, whence I had been long absent, and that little benefit would accrue from the services of a person under such constraint. He forbade the Hindoo, in a voice that made him tremble, to cease from urging the request, for he had formed an ultimate resolution.

WHEN the Dewan intimated to me the information, I noticed an evident agitation in his countenance; and though you may suppose that my mind was ill at ease, I forced upon myself that

that species of resignation which is habitual to an Asiatic in his day of trouble, and gravely affected to administer a comfort to the Dewan, which was more wanting to myself. From that moment, I never saw him,* nor did I ever impart to any one the story of my failure, well knowing, that had it become public, no one would have dared to have given me assistance or even shelter.

ON revolving the different modes of extrication from this dilemma, I bethought myself of the Banker, on whom I had brought a draft from Jumbo; and in the course of a day or two I applied to him for a passport. He very frankly assured me of his services, from which, as he was at that time high in the estimation of the governor, I entertained sanguine hopes of success, and to obviate the risque that might arise from the name of Khuroe, which had been inserted in the former memorial, I now took that of Eusuff, a Mahometan merchant, going on a commercial adventure to Peshour. But on the day when the passport was to have been issued, as if my evil star had determined to rule, the banker fell under the displeasure of the despot, which so wholly deranged him, that my business no longer occupied his thoughts. He had been solicited to advance a considerable loan to the government, but aware of the risque of such a negociation, he pleaded inability, and the last time I went

* This unfortunate man was I understand, afterwards put to death by Azad Khan, in one of his many moments of capricious cruelty.

to his house, he was trembling in an agony of fear, from an apprehension of Azad Khan's resentment.*

IN treating of the government of Kashmire, I omitted to mention, that it had not hitherto extended its apprehension to merchants, who, from the wealth which they introduced into the province, were respected and even indulged. The obstacles that stood in the way of my departure, now became serious, and gave me much anxiety. I was thrown into the power of a capricious tyrant, under a semblance also, which if discovered, might be fatal, and I was precluded by the late occurrence, from a personal application to the court. Endeavouring to remove the appearance of chagrin, I intreated the Georgian, who has been mentioned, to expedite my departure, though without communicating any part of the former failures. Only observing that the multiplicity of business, necessarily engrossing the attention of the dewan, of whose friendship for me he had been apprised prevented me from giving him further trouble. The business was undertaken with a zealous alacrity, and by an unremitted attendance of fifteen days, aided by a small bribe, was accomplished. Having hired a horse from a native of Peshour, who was returning to that city, and taken into my service a Persian boy, on the 11th of June I left Kashmire and my honest Georgian friend.

THE river Jalum, at the distance of ten miles from the

He was, at a future period, I am informed, put to death by the Afghan.

city,

city, is formed by the hollow surface of the country, into a sheet of water, of seven or eight miles in circumference, called in the Kashmirian language, the Wuller, which has a gentle southern current, and is gradually contracted as the land rises.

ON the morning of the 12th, arrived at Sompre, nine cosses, a populous town on the eastern side of the Jalum, where the passport was deposited and another issued. After a halt of three hours, which were chiefly employed in repairing the riding tackle, which was all of cordage, bridle, stirrups and girth, I proceeded in company with Mohubullah, the proprietor of the steed, and Huffin, the Persian boy, to the small village of Markore, a stage of ten cosses. Mohubullah made a good travelling pillaw, of which the bones were picked, and pluming myself on having outwitted the governor of Kashmire, I went to sleep in an adjacent mosque with a light heart.

ON the 13th, at Hourree Dana, four cosses, an hamlet, situate three miles within the boundary of the province. The night being cool, I had thrown over my bed-cloths a coat, in the pocket of which was deposited the passport; when, in an evil hour, just as I was beginning to awake, a thief snatched my coat, and made his escape. Had the coat been of any other colour than red, it would not, I believe, have attracted the marauder's notice; but a spark of vanity, many of which have lighted me into scenes of trouble, prompted the purchase of this gaudy garment, which before had
been

been often stared at. I mentioned to the officer in charge of the pass at the boundary, the affair of the theft and the loss of the passport, to the truth of which Mohubullah bore testimony, adding that I was Seid, and it was well known the Seids, never uttered a falsity; Huffin also swore by the beard of his father to the truth of the fact. The officer who was a Kashmirian heard the story, with a grave countenance, and looking as if he did not believe a word of it, said that I must procure another passport. Seeing that words made no impression on this vigilant guardian of his post, (which it would have surprised me, if they had.) I secretly, tendered him a few rupees,* for his good will. The sight of the money produced an immediate effect on every feature of his face, which softening into a smile of compliance, I moved on.—Our party had not preceded three hundred yards, when, four men were perceived running after us with great speed and, in a loud voice, ordering us to halt. On coming up they seized me, alledging I was a state criminal, whom they were directed to convey to the city; nor did I escape from their hands, until I had applied the argument, which had before opened the gate, but to a much larger amount.—Huffin, who had seen the

*The Rupee is the current coin of Kashmire, and that struck at Moradabad in Rohilcund, is held in the greatest estimation. From the baseness of the silver a large discount is allowed on that of Kashmire. Copper money of the value of a halfpenny and cowreys, a small marine shell, compose the other currency of this province.

passport and witnessed the theft, expressed astonishment at the largeness of the sum, and accused me of extravagant folly. But, he did not know the cause of my aversion to a public examination.

On the 14th, at Doumbah, fifteen cosses, a small village dependant on the chief of Muzzufferabad. The limit of Kashmire on this quarter is terminated by a low thick wood, the edge of which is skirted by a rivulet, and, on the other side rises a lofty chain of mountains, stretching to the north and south, whose summits are in some parts, now, covered with snow, a deep tract of which I crossed. The inhabitants of the Muzzufferabad districts, denominated Bombaus, are Mahometans of the Afghan tribe and inimical to the Kashmirians, who, under the father of the present governor, had laid their territory waste. The rumour of another invasion prevailing, at this time, I was strictly examined, but the management of Mohubullah, with a small donation, gave us an unmolested progress. The face of the country exhibits a continued view of mountains, on the side of which are seen patches of cultivated ground and scattered hamlets of three or four cottages.

On the 15th, at Noufere, twelve cosses, part of the road bended over the brow of a steep and craggy mountain, at the foot of which, a river, which here, takes the name of Muzzufferabad,* runs with extreme rapidity; and breaks upon the numerous insulated rocks that interrupt its passage, with a noise of thunder.

* The proper name of this river is the Kishen Gunga.

ON the 16th, at Paunch-Graum, six cosses, the road was still more difficult of passage than that of yesterday. The mountain being in some places so steep, that projecting beams are fixed, into its side, to support a path of planks, for the accommodation of foot passengers; horses are sent by another tract. This path hath been lately repaired, out of the savings of charity, by a Mahometan mendicant, who had, also, in a recess of the hill, erected a small building for the refreshment of travellers. It being one of these few acts of public benefit, within the compass of my knowledge, performed, by this class of men, I deem the communication a matter of conscience; for, too frequent occasions of reprobating them have already offered.

ON the 17th, at Muzzufferabad, ten cosses, a town standing on the eastern bank of the Kishen Gunga,* small, but populous, and the residence of a chief entitled Sultan Mahmoud, who after dividing the greatest portion of his territory among the younger branches of his family, reserved this town, with a district yielding about a lack of rupees, for his private maintenance.

ON the morning of the 18th, I crossed the river, and joined a shaul kafilah proceeding to Peshour. A ferry boat used at this

* The Kishen Gunga runs here, to the left, with a course nearly south-west and falls, I was informed, into the Jalum, among the mountains, at the head of the Punjab. I saw many people cross this river, on an inflated sheep or dog's skin, which, supporting the head and breast of the passenger, is impelled and guided by the motion of his legs.

place, is frequently, by the violence of the current and a rocky shore, dashed to pieces; And being now, in this state, I passed over, tho' with much difficulty, a bridge of ropes, about 100 yards in length. A stout rope, fastened to wooden posts, on either shore, has attached to it, a certain number of carved pieces of wood in the form of oxen yokes, with the forks placed vertically; and, the sides of the yokes being embraced by smaller ropes, afford a hold to the passengers.—The road from the limit of Kashmire to Muzzufferabad tends to the south-west and leads over a country, covered with mountains, which are thinly intersected with abrupt valleys.

On the 18th, halted at a mosque, on the western side of Kishen Gunga.

On the 19th, the kafilah proceeded a coss inland from the river. The heat of the weather during the day, and the remains of a sickness had so enervated me, that I could not walk a few paces, without extreme pain and lassitude. But, my little wants were, readily, supplied by Mohubullah, who procured good provisions, cooked them, and was my pipe bearer.

On the 20th, at Dunnee, three cosses, a small village, on the eastern bank of the Nhah, a narrow rapid river, which falls into the Kishen Gunga. The kafilah remained at this place, until the inhabitants had constructed a bridge, which consisted of two entire beams, at the distance of three feet asunder, with an interstice of planks, fastened by cordage. The performance of this work, a very

tedious one, was chiefly expedited by Sultan Mahmoud, in person, who, though an old man, shewed a persevering activity with a great share of good temper. The materials of the bridge, which had been floated from some distance, having, by the force of the current, been carried below the proper station, we were detained at Dunnee for another supply of wood, until the 28th, when we moved three coffes, and halted in an uninhabited valley.

On the 29th, on the summit of a mountain, ten coffes, in the districts of Jiddoon, governed by a Patan chief. In a steep part of this hill, where the path, from some rain that had fallen, was slippery, my horse stumbled; and had not a tree been within reach, a branch of which I caught, I must have been thrown down a lofty declivity. This night I experienced some of those inconveniencies to which travellers of my description are occasionally subject. My baggage was thoroughly soaked by the rain; and water, which had already so much annoyed me, was not to be found, nor a stick of fuel. These embarrassments, which made me testy and much disposed to quarrel with my neighbours, were at length obviated by the active services of Mohubullah, who having brought water and fuel from a long distance, prepared a mess of broth from some mutton in our store, which afforded a regale to a very hungry party. The Jiddoon road being difficult of access, is little frequented, and, until the passage of our kafilah, had never, I was informed, been used by merchants. The common tract lies through the Puckley territory, but the inhabitants of that quarter, notorious

notorious for a fierce and predatory disposition, had lately committed so many robberies on commercial property, that the director of our party judged the route too hazardous.

ON the 30th, at Manghellee, six coffes, a small town, the residence of a Shadee Khan, the chief of Tidtoon. Halted at this place for the adjusting the payment of duties, and of an escort, that had accompanied our progress through the country, until the 4th of July, when we proceeded to Kotillee, a fort in the possession of Meimoun Khan, a brother and vassal of the chief of Janoul. Halted on the 5th, to compose a difference of opinion, that had arisen among the merchants, respecting the choice of a road.

ON the 6th, at Nheamut or Enayet Serau, eight coffes, a fortified village, with a karavanfera, situate on the western limit of Janoul, the territory of Gul Shere Khan, a Mahometan of the Afghan tribe. Being told that the merchants would be detained some days at this place, for the discharge of customs, and thence proceed to the town of Beer, the residence of Gul Shere, where as at many other stations, a long delay would be occasioned, I proposed to Mohubullah the prosecution of our journey by a nearer route. He gave a ready assent to the measure, assuring me also, that his knowledge of the country and many of the principal people promised very reasonable success; but he required, as the first condition, an implicit obedience to all his directions, and a

restraint on that impatience of temper, with which he was sorry to observe I was too much actuated.

ON the 7th we left the Serauce, and conducted by a guide through an unfrequented path, we passed without molestation the Tyrrhone districts, where most danger was apprehended, and halted, during the heat of the day, at a small fortified village.

IN the evening, after various alarms, we arrived at the fort of Kote, nine coffes, which, with an adjacent district, is held by a Nujjeeb Khan. It is to be noticed, that Enayet Serau stands on the west side of a break of that great range of mountains, extending along the head of the Punjab, and within which I had travelled, with little variation, from the Ganges to that place, whence I entered the plain country.

ON the 8th, at Mourree, five coffes, a small village, depending on the Harbarry territory, which is governed by a powerful Afghan chief. We had set out from Kote in good spirits, enjoying the idea of being liberated from a party obstructed by constant delays, and the hope of making an expeditious journey, through a tract, which was, we now found, exposed to the incursions of banditti. But these pleasing thoughts were wholly dispelled by the intelligence of a passenger, who told us, that when he left Kote, a body of horsemen were preparing to follow and plunder us. Mohubullah immediately resolved to return to the fort, where he said they would be deterred from offering

offering any violence, and having lodged me in a house of one of the inhabitants, he went to a neighbouring village, the residence of a Seid, who had acquired a great influence in that quarter, and solicited his protection, which he informed me by a messenger had been readily granted. On receiving this favorable intelligence, I went to the Seid to return thanks for this opportune assistance, and found him stretched on a bed amidst a grove of shady trees, and surrounded with boys, some fanning him, while others were gently rubbing his body. Though his manners evidently displayed that superiority which the supposed descendants of Mahomet usually assume from their lineage and rank, he was not wanting in a polite civility; nor did he refuse some small offerings, that were presented to him with much respect. The authority of this man was so implicitly admitted, that we were escorted in safety by a single domestic, whose services were liberally rewarded. Fear produces in the mind strong effusions of an apparent generosity and gratitude, and when skilfully wrought on by the man of the world, seldom fails to yield him an ample harvest. It is a severe reflection on humanity, says Bruyere, that the disposition of man is ever the most effectually meliorated in the hour of calamity. At Mourree we received intelligence, that a Peshour kafilah, had a few hours before departed on its way home, which gave us great joy, especially to Mohubullah, who now saw the near prospect of a conclusion to the perilous task he had undertaken.

ON

ON the morning of the 9th, before day light, we left Mourree, and after travelling some hours through a wild and gloomy tract, on which the turn of my mind, threw perhaps, an additional shade, and encountering many ill-looking fellows, who viewed us with a keen eye, we joined the Peshour party, where we experienced from the countrymen of Mohubullah, every token of welcome.

AT noon arrived at Hyder Bunghee, nine coffes, a populous village dependant on Attock, the principal town of a small district, which acknowledges the supremacy of Timur Shah. The chief, an Afghan, yields an obedience conformable to the motions of that prince, or the leading motives of the day; but, when destitute of other resource, he furnishes a tribute of about fifty thousand rupees.

ON the 10th, at Bazzar, five coffes, a small village, at the distance of three quarters of a mile from the western shore of the river Indus,* which we crossed about twenty miles above the town of Attock. The stream, though not agitated by wind, was rapid with a rough undulating motion, and about three quarters of a mile, or a mile in breadth, where it was not interrupted by islands; and having, as nearly as I could judge, a west and by south course. The water was much discoloured by a fine black

* In the Persian language, usually called the Ab or Water of Scind, and sometimes Neil Ab or Blue Water; and by the Hindoos Scind and Attock.

sand, which, when put into a vessel, quickly subsided. It was so cold, from (I apprehend,) a large mixture of snow, then thawed by the summer heats, that in drinking it, my teeth suffered a violent pain. In our boat were embarked seventy persons, with much merchandize and some horses. This unweildy lading, the high swell of the current, and the confusion of the frightened passengers made the passage dangerous and very tedious.

THE Indus forms a strong barrier to Hindostan on the west, and it seems a manifest truth, that had the Indians made their grand stand on the banks of this river, at the period of the Tartar, Afghan, and Persian invasions, their empire might have made a powerful resistance. Armies at all times have sustained difficulties and damage in crossing the Indus, but the attempt to force its passage must be arduous and full of danger.

THE road from Muzzufferabad, tending to the south-west, led me through the mountains, into the upper part of the Punjab, at Nheamut Serau; from which place to Kote, are seen some scattered hills; but thence, the country is plain and thinly wooded. The inhabitants, chiefly Afghans, or as they are called, in India, Patans, live in small forts or walled villages, and entertain such mutual dread and distrust of each other, that a single traveller is a rare object. The depredations of the Sicques, on the Attock and adjacent districts, generally subject this tract of country to much desolation, and a failure of rain, in the preceding year, now gave it the appearance of a desert.

ON the 11th, at Akorah, a small town. At the distance of six miles from the great river, crossed the Attock, so called, in these parts, from its falling in the Indus, in the vicinity of the town of that name; but, in some of the interior parts of Afghanistan, it is denominated the Kabul river.* The weather had now become extremely hot; and I was often surprized, at my ability to bear, with scarcely a shelter, the force of so scorching a sun. I arrived at Akorah about noon; when, immediately entering a spacious cool mosque, I spread my bed, and lay down much at my ease. In the evening, the time of a common prayer, being desired, by one of the Mollahs or Priests, to prepare myself for the ceremony, I urged in excuse, the debilitated state of my body which prevented the requisite performance of so incumbent a duty; looking at me with contempt, he said, it was the more necessary to pray, that I might obtain better health. At midnight, I perceived a person endeavouring to take my turban from the bed-clothes, and being caught by the arm, he told me in a faltering voice, that he was the Mollah of the mosque, and, from his speech, I believe, the man who had reprehended my neglect of prayer. What think you, my friend, of these Mahometans, who, if they wash and pray at the five stated times, abstain from wine and the flesh of hogs, and utter a string of Arabic ejaculations which they do not understand, believe that they have procured the divine licence

* Its course lying within six miles to the south-east of that city.

to violate the laws of justice. This opinion is not formed on the moment, but has arisen from long experience and the intimate intercourse, which my various occupations in India have produced; and is now so firmly substantiated by undeviating testimony, that it shapes my general sentiments of the Mahometan character. When they daringly commit these acts on each other, even amidst the rites of their religion, what is to withhold their attacks on those of a different faith?

THIS day a body of Afghan cavalry encamped in the environs of Akorah, and overspread the country like a swarm of locusts, devouring and destroying wherever they went. It seemed as if the land was invaded, they entered in a violent manner, every village within their scope, and fed themselves and horses at the expense of the inhabitants. Such expeditions afford these hungry creatures almost the only public means of subsistence; for when inactive, they are often reduced to such distress, by the blind parsimony of their prince, that their horses, arms, and cloths are sold for a livelihood.

ON the 12th, at the village of Peer Pyah, ten coffes.

ON the 13th, at the village of Kalalah, eight coffes, the residence of Mohubullah's family, where I was treated with much hospitality. The male inhabitants of this village, are all proprietors of mules, and employed in conveying merchandize, and from the name of their abode, denominated Kalals.

ON the 14th, at Peshour, four coſſes, a large, populous and opulent city, governed, with the dependant diſtricts, by an Afghan officer, who remits to the capital a revenue of ſeven lacks of rupees. The road from the Indus to Peshour, has nearly a weſt and by ſouth direction; and the country to Akora is ſandy and interſperſed with ſtones; from thence to Peshour, are ſeen many tracts of cultivation. The city of Peshour was founded by the great Acbar, who ſeeing, it is ſaid, the Afghans averſe from dwelling in towns and the occupations of commerce, encouraged the inhabitants of the Punjab, Mahometans, and Hindoos, to reſort to his new ſettlement, where their deſcendants have greatly multiplied. From its well choſen poſition, which unites, by a commercial chain, Perſia and Afghanistan with India, Peshour has become an important mart, and the reſidence of wealthy merchants; eſpecially of the ſhaul dealers, many of whom diſliking the dangerous and tedious route of Kaſhmire, are here enabled to make their purchaſes at a moderate advance on the firſt coſt. I found a ſmall ſociety of Jews at Peshour, living at their eaſe, and in the enjoyment of an unreſerved protection.

THE heat of Peshour ſeemed to me more intense, than that of any country I have viſited in the upper parts of India. Other places may be warm; hot winds blowing over tracts of ſand, may drive us under the ſhelter of a wetted ſkreen; but at Peshour, the atmosphere in the ſummer ſolſtice, becomes almoſt inflammable. Yet it muſt be noticed, it favour of its ſalubrity, even in this
torrid

torrid state, that the people enjoy uncommonly good health, and are little subject to epidemical disorders. The markets are abundantly supplied with provisions of an excellent kind, particularly the mutton, which is the flesh of the large tailed sheep, said to have been first discovered in South America. Though the city is so much frequented by merchants and travellers, it has no karavansera; and I thought myself fortunate in procuring admittance into an old mosque, where I continued for many days to dissolve in an unremitting state of perspiration, the mention of which, leads me to an occurrence, that involved me in great perplexity.

At Kashmire, a part of my property had been converted into a bill of five hundred rupees, on Kabul, which was lodged in a canvas belt, that served me as a girdle; on examining the condition of the bill, at Peshour, I found the writing so much obliterated by perspiration, that no one could read, or even conjecture its subject; from beginning to end, it had literally a black appearance. The apprehension of the evident difficulties which would attend my want of money, in a country where the most sanguine hope could promise no assistance, and the necessity of mixing in societies, void of every good or rational principle, occasionally operated in depressing my spirits. But the desire which had originally impelled the journey, and the zeal which had hitherto maintained its pursuit, at length dissipated these

gloomy impressions, and in gay colours, described a various scene of future pleasure.

BEING informed that a kafilah was immediately proceeding to Kabul, I hired a mule, and went to the adjacent village of Tackal, the usual rendezvous of travellers, going to the westward. On my arrival there, I learned, that the great kafilah still continued at Peshour, and that only some horsemen confiding in their speed and arms, had moved early in the morning towards Kabul. A reflection on the predicament in which I then stood, the slow pace of my mule, which had more the appearance of an ass, and the representation of the muleteer, whose fears prompted innumerable falsties, slackened my strong inclination to escape from the heats of Peshour, and after making a fruitless attempt to overtake the horsemen, I returned to my lodging in the mosque. Sauntering one day in the bazar, the common resort of idle, as well as busy people, I saw a person, with whom I had travelled from Muzzufferabad to Enayet Serau. We agreed, as our road was the same, to travel together, and in the mean time to share the same fare. So cordial is the pleasure resulting from society, so naturally do we cling on each other, whether for support or amusement, that I immediately looked on this man as an approved friend, and felt a confidence from the connection, which set my mind at perfect ease. On enquiry into the finance of my associate, whose name was Noor Mahomed, I discovered, that he possessed in cash,

cash, one rupee, on which himself, a boy and a horse, were to be subsisted until his arrival at Kabul, a journey of twelve or fourteen days; I perceived also, that on the expenditure of this sum, he would seek an aid from me. Fully apprized of the danger, as well as inconveniency of disclosing the amount of my property, I gravely told Noor Mahomed, that I had then no more than three rupees, which, with his single one, should be placed in a joint fund, and that on it and providence, we must trust until our arrival at the capital. The Mahometan, with a countenance brightening with faith and zeal, exhorted me to be of good cheer; for that true believers were never deserted in the hour of need.

On the 25th of July, accompanying a large kafilah, in which a portion of the Kashmire tribute, invested in shauls, was conveyed, we proceeded to the village of Tackal, three cosses, where we laid in a provision for three days journey, the ensuing tract of country, for that distance, being thinly inhabited.

On the 26th, at Timrood, four cosses, a fortified small village, situate on the south side of a range of rocky mountains, which reflected a scorching heat on the plain beneath. The inhabitants of this village, genuine Afghans, have little respect, though residing so near Peshour, for either the person of Timur Shah, or his government, which was in some degree evinced during our halt. The governor of Kashmire had sent with our kafilah, for the use of the prince, four large dogs of Thibet, which were carried in litters, and attended with much care. The keepers had
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led them to drink at a pond, where an Afghan woman was filling her pitcher, but, on seeing these animals, which the Mahometans hold unclean, she put it down and by a shower of stones and abuse drove the whole party from the place, loudly calling at the same time, on the villagers to her assistance, which she little needed. The Afghans immediately assembled and completed the route of the dogs and their keepers, bestowing on the Shah, also, very contemptuous language, nor were they suffered to return to the pond, until escorted by the kafilah guard.

ON the 27th, at Dickah, eighteen coffes, a small village, standing on the southern bank of the Kabul or Attock river, which here runs to the right, or eastward. At the distance of about two miles from Timrood, we entered a narrow defile, which intersects the chain of mountains, lying to the north of the village. At the entrance of the pass, the Afghans stopped the kafilah, and, excepting some troops of the Shah, levied a small contribution on all the passengers; they receive, also, an annual sum from the government of Peshour, for permitting travellers to pass unmolested through their district. In the first part of this day's journey, fraught throughout, with danger and fatigue, the rain which fell in torrents, nearly destroyed my papers, and completed the obliteration of the bill, now destitute of mark or token; and I judged it as formally cancelled, as if a receipt had been passed for the amount. Towards the close of the day, I was entangled, by my own indiscretion, in a perilous adventure, the issue of which, must be, wholly ascribed

to

to good fortune. When the rain had ceased, the heat of the sun was extreme, and neither shelter or water was to be procured. Anxious to escape from these inconveniencies, for the journey was yet long, and the kafilah proceeded at a slow rate, about thirty of us, mounted, and the greater part well armed, resolved to leave the escort. Had I derived the uses which men usually do from experience, and reflected but a little on those resulting, especially in my situation, from the *festina lente*, I should not have joined this Quixote detachment. We had advanced about four miles, when a small body of Afghans, which had issued from the hills and stopped us, peremptorily demanded a sum of money, as a toll for passing through their territory. Here I feel myself sensibly humbled, when, as a faithful narrator, I am obliged to say, that our corps behaved in a most pusillanimous manner and sacrificed without fair cause, the evident advantage which a common exertion of spirit would have given. We were about thirty, strong, and, to the fight, resolute good looking fellows; all armed, except myself, with matchlocks or side arms. On the enemies approach, our leader, a portly man with a large beard and spreading mustachios, mounted on a curvetting steed, was struck with a violent terror, which was instantly communicated to the party. The mountaineers failed not to augment the consternation, and, without ceremony, proceeded to the usual modes of plunder: But, fearful of the arrival of the kafilah, they were prevented from a total capture. Aware of the risk of this day's journey, I had concealed
my

my cash in two long and narrow purses, which, in the manner of garters, were tyed round my legs. This arrangement was fortunate, for the Afghans perceiving my reluctance to dismount, knocked me off the mule, and forcibly opened the different parts of my dress; not finding any thing of value, they were proceeding to treat me with violence, when a Hindoo, of the family of the Dewan of Kashmire, who had known me in that country, interposed his good offices, and proposed a ransom for my release. This generous Hindoo, who I hope will undergo no further transmigration, unless he likes it, exerted so much warmth in my behalf and spoke so urgently to those marauders, that one of them gave him a severe blow on the face. He did not, however desist, but by an active perseverance, supported by a small sum of money, he accomplished his purpose. At the close of this affair, I had mounted my mule and was rejoicing at the escape, when I received a smart blow on my back; and turning about, an Afghan, who had taken this mode of attracting my notice, told me, with an exulting laugh, that our party might now move on, as the kafilah was in fight, but directed us, if the safety of our lives was regarded, not to join it until it should have passed the place of action. This injunction was speedily obeyed by me and some others; but our doughty commander, seeing the near prospect of relief, began to utter many bold words, and shew a disposition of recovering his property and honor by an assault of the Afghans; who roused at the menace, though the kafilah was close at hand, drew their daggers

daggers and advanced their shields, daring him to battle and to fight for what he had lost. The cautious officer, again, qualified his wrath; but he reprobated them in very spirited language, and denounced a severe vengeance on some fitter occasion. In the latter part of the journey, an Hindoo, who had gone about a quarter of a mile from the party, was plundered of property to the amount of four hundred rupees, by a small body of these robbers who had made a sudden descent from the hills, and before assistance could be given, secured the booty. It was with much pleasure, after the peril and toil of the day, I saw the Kabul river and the small village of Dickah, where we halted. The stage from Timrood to Dickah, usually called the Hyber-pass, being the only one in which much danger is to be apprehended from banditti, the officer of the escort gave orders to his party to quit the kafilah, and march early on the next morning. This opportunity, at once offering safety and expedition, was not to be foregone; yet, the muleteer was with great difficulty persuaded to embrace it, and but for the interference of Noor Mahomed, who was obliged to beat him into compliance, I must have attended the tedious progress of the kafilah. Before I quit this station it is necessary to lay before you a brief account of the tribe of Afghans, through whose district we had now passed.

You will naturally be surprized, that a small body of people residing near the capital of an extensive empire, should not have been restrained from infesting one of its most public roads. The

lawless conduct of this sect of Afghans, who are known in this country by the name of Hybers, originates chiefly in the imbecility of Timur Shah's government, and his want of military spirit. They are strongly aided also in the pursuit of a free-booting life, by the situation of their country, which forms a chain of rocky mountains, whose scanty slips of valley afford but the coarsest provision for human wants. This rude race of men have made so slow a progress in civilization, that the greatest part of them, like the storied Troglodites of old, dwell in caves, or rather in the fissures of rocks. Though professing the Mahometan religion, they are little more versed in it than believing Mahomet to be their prophet, that he had four distinguished friends, and that the Persians, with the whole sect of Ali, are a miscreant race of infidels. The Hyber dialect is founded on the common language of the Afghans, but harshly guttural, and is ill understood by the adjacent tribes. Timur Shah, who used formerly to pass the winter at Peshour, which is there much milder than at Kabul, never passed through the territory of the Hybers, without their attacking his advanced or rear guard. An Armenian, with whom I was acquainted in travelling from Moultan towards Kabul, arrived at Peshour, where taking alarm at the perils of the Hyber-pass, he returned to Moultan, a journey of three weeks, thence he proceeded to Kundahar, a month's journey, from which place it is a distance of fifteen days to Kabul; making in all, a passage of nine weeks, which

which is usually performed by the Hyber-track in eleven days. This fact, at the same time that it marks the caution and patience of an Armenian, explains the dread entertained of the Hybers.

ON the 28th, before day break, having joined the party that had escorted the kafilah, we left Dickah, and, at the distance of seven coffes, halted near the village of Biffouly, to dry our baggage, which had been exposed all the morning to a heavy rain. In moving again, we experienced many obstacles from the extreme darkness of the night, and the numerous currents of water, which suddenly produced by the rains, poured from the hills with extreme impetuosity; carrying with them stones of a vast size, whose rolling noise resembled thunder. It was midnight, the sky was overcast with black clouds, and the roaring of the torrents heard on all sides, created in my mind a certain horror mingled with awe, and I was involuntarily led to consider this grand scene of nature with sentiments of profound reverence.

ON approaching a rivulet, which had been greatly enlarged by the rain, our chief dispatched first, that she might not be incommoded by the crowd, one of his favourite women, who, though mounted on a strong horse, had no sooner entered the stream, than she was swept away by its force and drowned. This event occasioned an immediate halt, and very sensibly afflicted our leader, who threw himself on the ground, and loudly lamented the fate of his mistress. At day break, the body was found on the shore, co-

vered with mud, and after interring it with such ceremonies as the occasion admitted, our party crossed the stream, now reduced to a small size.

ON the 29th, at Jillalabad,* twelve coffes, formerly a town of great note, and though now much decayed, still supporting a moderate traffic. It has a public market, and the adjacent district produces a coarse sugar. Yesterday the country was open and fertile; to day the road led over a barren tract, interspersed with hills.

ON the 30th, at the village of Balabaugh, eight coffes.

ON the 31st, at the village of Gundamouck, ten coffes; about three miles to the eastward of Gundamouck, crossed a small fordable river,† running to the southward or right, over which are the remains of a bridge built of bricks. The air, hitherto hot, had assumed at this place a sudden coldness; not effected by any change of weather, but agreeably to the observation of travellers, peculiar to the climate of this part of the country. The shortness of our stay would not permit an inquiry into the cause of this quick transition, nor could any of my associates, though used to the road, give a reasonable account of it. Passengers, I believe, throughout Asia, make journies merely from motives of profit or conveniency, sometimes of religion. A desire of knowledge, or

* The Attock river runs about two miles to the northward of the town.

† I imagine it falls into the Attock river at some short distance.

even pleasure, rarely carries them abroad; and they move from one stage to another, without deviating an unnecessary footstep. Yet they are minutely skilled in the rates of provisions at all the markets, and whether the place is a hot or a cold one, farther they know not, nor do they ever ask. Near the village of Gundamouck is seen a white stone, said to resemble the head of an elephant, and I believe, that which the Persians term the Sung Suffede.* The air, in this quarter, must have been strongly impregnated with nitrous particles, for all the exposed parts of my body became covered with a white scaly substance, of a saline taste, which in a short time excoriated the outer skin.

ON the 1st of August, at Baracow, a sandy uninhabited valley, ten cosses. The officer of the escort, proceeding this day to Kabul with those that were well mounted, our party was reduced to a small number. We remained, during the noon heat, at Juggid Ali, where I think there is only one house, which stands under the shade of a few trees, and where it is said, the wind continues to blow with violence during the whole year. Its force did not abate during our stay, and if such is its usual rate, Æolus, had he lived in our day, would at least have chosen Juggid Ali for one of his country seats. Noor Mahomed, whom I suppose you have lost sight of, believing that my money was now expended, or that I would not advance more,

* Signifying in the Persian a white stone.

had

had for some time treated me with neglect, almost insult, and in despite of his former assurance, that zealous Mahometans were never abandoned, we should have felt extreme distress, had he not borrowed a little cash from a horse dealer, and I from the private fund.

On the 2d of August we commenced our journey, that day a long one, at three o'clock in the morning, and in ascending a high steep hill, which forms one side of the valley of Baracow, the tackle of my mule broke; when I, the animal and baggage, rolled rapidly to the bottom. In my way down, I roared out with vehemence for assistance, but every person being engaged in more interesting business, no notice was taken of my clamours. My situation would have been very comfortless, had I not perceived Noor Mahomed passing close by me, whose help I earnestly intreated. After a long hesitation, and a hearty curse which I bore with patience, he consented to stay, and having assisted in collecting my scattered garments, and repairing the mule's tackle, we proceeded together. During a smart debate, in which his illiberal conduct and my ill luck were keenly reprobated, it was found that we had strayed from the path. But the effects of a mutual fear, soon absorbed the late grievance, and united our exertions in discovering the right path, which was found after much groping.

Crossing a range of rocky hills, which extends with little intervention of valley for the space of about eight miles, we entered
a wide

a wide plain well watered and interspersed with walled villages. The Kabul river runs through this plain, over which, at the distance of four or five miles to the southward of the city, is a bridge * built of bricks. On our approach to the capital, an active scene of personal decoration took place, yet in a fashion very different from that of the beaux of Europe. Instead of powdering and curling the hair of the head, a Mahometan is there close shorn, and so far from thinking that beauty is imparted by a smooth chin, he measures the comeliness of his countenance, even the extent of honour, by the length and breadth of his beard.† It is no uncommon oath in this country to swear by the beard; and to call a man *bud reish*, or bad beard, is held a bitter reproach, but *petit maitres* are not wanting among the Mahometans, especially in the exhibition of the beard; and though they do not apply to it *marechale* powder or pomade divine, it is clipped into some favourite shape with much nicety, and should the natural hue be not liked, it is stained with a shining black colour,‡ which lasts a long time. Imagining from the behaviour of Noor Mahomed, that I should not see him again, and wishing to make a final trial of his disposition, I desired him to fix some period for the payment of his debt, which a fair and very short account stated at

* Called Byramy.

† The Persians, Afghans, and most of the natural Turks, encourage the growth of the beard; while the Indian Mahometans, Patans excepted, ordinarily shave it.

‡ This dye is composed of Indigo, and the leaves of the Ivony shrub.

five shillings. He observed with much indifference, that the road was an improper place for the adjustment of accounts, and that he would take some future occasion for the purpose.

In the evening I arrived at Kabul, fifteen cosles, the capital of the Afghan empire; and, after a long search, found a Georgian, for whom I had brought a letter of introduction, from his countryman at Kashmire; having read the letter, he made me an offer of half his apartment, and such assistance as a stranger might need. This acceptable tender was embraced with little circumlocution, and I was immediately received into a mess, which then consisted of Bagdasir the Georgian, and the Armenian whom I mentioned to have made the circuitous route from Peshour to Kabul. My host resided in a karavansera, once paid by foreign traders, and had passed twenty years of his life at Kabul. My first care was to disclose to him the injured state of my bill; at which he shook his head, observing, that as no letter in it seemed legible, it was not to be expected men would come forward in a business, that would in any shape, take money from them. The Merchants of Kabul, he said, differed much in their mode of dealing, from those of India, and with difficulty, were brought to discharge payments demanded on the clearest authority, much less on a plea so equivocal as that of mine. The truth of this reasoning was on the next day fully proved, for not a merchant of the city, and all were applied to, would even attempt to decypher the paper, when he understood it contained

contained an order of payment. This event sensibly affected my future progress, and I feared would detain me at Kabul until clearer credentials were obtained. Another occurrence befell me at this time, of a much more trivial nature; but as it serves to portray perhaps a national character, may deserve a notice.

THE muleteer, who had accompanied me from Peshour, charged me with having given him a counterfeit rupee on the road, and now required its exchange. He had before made known to me his suspicion of this piece of money, which one of the passengers had given him, and had solicited my interference for redress. When I recounted this fact, reprobating also the shameless fraudulency of the attempt, the boy, for he was not more than sixteen years of age, daringly told me to spare my words and pay the money, or he would prefer a double complaint against me, and make oath to the kazzi, that none of the mule-hire had been paid; though himself had witnessed the advance of half the hire at Peshour. His youthful appearance, and so intrepid a declaration, united in striking me with horror, and I instantly put my hand to my purse to prevent his purpose, when Bagdasir, who had heard our discourse, insisted that no money should be paid without an order from the judge. They went to that officer's court, where the muleteer, without a wince, made oath to the truth of his demand, which was forthwith paid

by Bagdasir, who returned crossing himself, and congratulated my easy escape from the clutches of a young incarnate devil.

By sleeping in the open air I imagine, and on nitrous ground, a fever, accompanied with an ague, seized me a few days after my arrival at Kabul, the effects of which were singularly violent. The fever, during its continuance, caused a delirious stupefaction, and created an insatiable thirst, which frequently relieving by draughts of extremely cold water, it seemed at once to gush from every pore, and drenched me in profuse perspiration. When the fit of ague commenced, my bed-cloths, with those of Bagdasir, and all the horse-covering that could be procured, were heaped on me, but to little purpose; for I lay in the state of the damned, if such can be formed by human idea, until the paroxysm had wreaked its vengeance. My body was filled with spots of a very bright colour, shaded between purple and crimson, which I should have beheld with pleasure, thinking that such eruption would diminish the disease, had not an Armenian pronounced them a symptom of the plague. This opinion gave a common alarm; and though no alteration appeared in the conduct of Bagdasir, it operated strongly on the fears of my neighbours, and they were disposed to exclude me from their quarter, when I confidently asserted that the fever of the plague always produced its crisis in three days. Seeing that I had endured seven, and preserved a brisk flow of spirits, their apprehension was much allayed, and the scheme of banishment set aside.

ENDEA-

ENDEAVOURING one day to look through the tube of my tobacco-pipe with my right eye, the left being closed, I perceived it to be wholly without sight. This was a mortifying event, and that my ills might be more grievous, I was afflicted with a spitting of blood. Bagdasir now called in a doctor of physic, who after pronouncing me in a deplorable state, and that little short of a miracle could save me, undertook the cure, through the medium of some medicine only known, he said, to himself, and which had never failed of success. Entertaining from the discourse of my physician, but a slender opinion of his ability, I used, under different pretences, to send Bagdasir out of the room, and disposed of the medicine where no injury could be done. The disorder having directed its full force against me for the space of twenty days, began, as if wearied with the exertion, to abate, and in a short time it wholly ceased, but my frame was so shattered and my nerves so much relaxed, that I could scarcely crawl about, and the least noise produced a violent tremor. In the course of my illness I was visited by many of the Armenians, and one of them, a zealous devotee, desired me to swallow some small rolls of paper, on which were written certain mysterious words, infallible, he said, in their effects, upon the bodies of pious christians.

I EXPRESSED my thanks to this dealer in spells, and readily agreed to take his dose, should Bagdasir who was my absolute director, give assent. On an investigation into their virtue, he permitted me, though with reluctance, for he abhorred the Armenian

fect, to eat them, at the same time expressing strong doubts of their efficacy. But whether from not being a member of the orthodox faith, as the Armenian urged, or according to the Georgian, from the heretical preparation of the charm, I received no benefit, indeed I grew daily worse, as the sickness was then in its progressive stage.

OBSERVING on my arrival at Kabul, a common toleration of religion; that Christians, Hindoos and Jews, openly professed their creed, and pursued their occupations without molestation; and aware also that the Mahometan character would deprive me of the advantage of Bagdasir's connection, I had informed him that I was a native of Europe, returning from India into my own country. At first I designed to take the name of a Frenchman, but the wandering temper of that people, who stray into every corner of the earth, made me fear detection; and had I been hardy enough to become an Englishman, one of those who have absorbed the Mahometan power in India, and in this country have obtained a superior military reputation, I should perhaps at this day, have been a bombadier in the corps of Timur Shah's artillery. To avoid these risques, I denominated myself a Spaniard.

It was with much satisfaction I saw the road from Kabul to Persia open, and a fair prospect of performing the journey into Europe, by the route which I had originally proposed. Two Armenian travellers, who had gone by sea from Astracan to Ure Gunje, a Tartar station on one of the rivers at the head of the Caspian,

Caspian, and thence to Kabul, by the road of Bochara and Balk, were earnest in persuading me to pursue their tract as the shortest and most free from danger. Yet in this scheme were some essential defects. The Persian language, on which was founded my chief support, would in this route render me little use, I learned also that the winter of Bochara was severe and long, that the Ure Gunje river, continued frozen until the month of March, and that no Russian vessel came there before May; though a journey from Kabul to the northern shore of the Caspian, by the way of Tartary, might be performed in two months and a half, yet by winding at Bochara, and the eventual delays of procuring a passage by sea, it did not seem probable that I should reach Astracan before the ensuing June. This reason, with the dislike of visiting a country now barren of events or of any grand object of curiosity, determined me to enter Persia, where a knowledge of the language would assist in extending research, as well as combat with more probable success, the difficulties incident to my situation.

Having too fully, I fear, expatiated on personal concerns, I will now pursue the more useful tendency of this letter, and inform you that Kabul, the residence of Timur Shah and the capital of his dominion, is a walled city of about a mile and a half in circumference, and situated on the eastern side of a range of two united hills, describing generally the figure of a semicircle. The fortification, which is of a simple construction, with

with scarcely a ditch, and the houses built of rough stones, clay, and unburned bricks, exhibit a mean appearance, and are ill suited to the grandeur which I expected to see in the capital of a great empire. But the Afghans are a rude unlettered people, and their chiefs have little propensity to the refinements of life, which indeed their country is ill qualified to gratify.

FROM the Indus to the western limit of this extensive territory, there is an invariable deficiency of wood; infomuch, that the lower class of people in the northern quarter, suffer as much, perhaps from a want of fuel in the winter season, as those of other countries would do from a scarcity of provisions.

BALAU SIR, the name of the Shah's palace, where also the household servants, guards, and the slaves are lodged, stands on a rising ground in the eastern quarter of the city, and exhibits but a slender testimony of the dignity of its master. Having noticed what has not been done to decorate Kabul, I must not omit to mention the works of Ali Murdan Khan. This omrah, who held an eminent station in the service of Jehanguir, erected, nearly in the centre of the city, four spacious bazaars, or market places in a line, which consist of a range of apartments on each side of two floors, the lower appropriated to merchants, and that above to private use. The intermediate space between the ranges, is covered by an arched roof, and each bazaar is separated by an open square, which was supplied with fountains,

tains, but now choaked with filth or occupied by the meanest order of mechanics. Ali Murdan has left behind him many monuments of liberality and taste; the grandest, though now in ruins, is seen in the vicinity of Dehli, and displays at once a design, useful and magnificent.

DURING the splendid æra of Dehli, when it covered according to popular tradition, a space of twenty miles, the inhabitants who resided at a distance from the Jumna, which skirted only one of its angles, experienced much difficulty in procuring river water, that of the wells not being esteemed so salubrious. Ali Murdan, desirous of relieving this common grievance, surveyed the land to the westward, and saw that a sluice, opened from the Jumna, where that river approaches Karnal, would from the declivity of the ground, introduce water into the back part of the city and conduct it through all the quarters. The design was put in execution, and to reward his success and preserve the work in good condition, Ali Murdan was vested with the privilege of levying a certain tax, on those houses which enjoyed the uses of the canal. Water was conveyed by this branch of the Jumna, forming a distance of more than one hundred miles and afforded a commodious supply to all the inhabitants; nor, did the canal fall into decay, until the period of the Persian and Afghan invasions. Ali Murdan, who in his taste and disposition would not have disgraced the Roman Lucullus, bestowed on the public numerous edifices and gardens; one of which thickly shaded with cypresses.

cypress trees, stands in the environs of Peshour, and another at Nimlah, a small village lying about eighty miles to the south-east of Kabul, on the Peshour road.

A RESPECT for the memory of this omrah has, perhaps led me into too wide a deviation from which I will now return, and inform you that the districts of Kabul abound in excellent provisions, and that its market is arranged in a neater manner and more like that of an European town, than any I have seen in Asia. The fruits are of a good kind and in great plenty, as apples, pears, peaches, pomegranates and a variety of grapes.

THIS quarter of Afghanistan, possessing but few Indian productions, receive sugars and cotton cloths, chiefly from Peshour, whither it sends iron, leather and tobacco. To Kandahar it exports iron, leather and lamp oil, whence there turns are made in sundry manufactures of Persia and Europe, with a large supply of melons of an excellent sort. The Tartars of Bochara, bring to Kabul the horses of Turkistan, furs and hides, the latter resembling those in Europe, called Bulgar, the amount of which is applied to the purchase of Indigo, and other commodities of India.

THE adjacent parts of Usbeck Tartary of which Balk* is the capital, hold a species of dependency on Timur Shah and maintain a common intercourse with Kabul. I have seen the great bazaar, crowded with Usbecks, who have the same cast of features as the

* This city is about two hundred miles to the north-west of Kabul.

Chinese and Malays, but more harsh. Among the foreign nations who frequent this city, the Hindoos, chiefly of Peshour, contribute more than any other to enrich it, by a superior industry and knowledge of commerce; and they enjoy under the Afghan government, a liberty and protection, little short of that experienced by the inhabitants of our Indian possessions. The benefits derived by a state from the residence of any class of people, usually ensure to them a security of person and property; but the Hindoos of Kabul are indebted, I believe, for special indulgence to one of their own sect, who controuls the revenues of the Shah, and stands high in favour. The environs of Kabul are, chiefly occupied by garden grounds, and watered by numerous streams; the largest running through the city, over which is a small bridge,* affords a plentiful supply of salubrious water.

KABUL as has been before noticed, stands near the foot of two conjoined hills, whose length has nearly an east and west direction. Towards the base of the eastern stands, on a flat projection, a fortified palace, which was formerly the habitation of the governors of the city; but it has been converted by Timur Shah into a state prison, where the brothers of this prince and other branches of his family are kept in confinement. Above this building is seen a small tower on a peak, whence the ground rises to a considerable height, and is united by a neck of lower land to the

* Called I have since been informed the Pool Mistan.

other hill. From the peak, a stone wall extends over the summits of the two hills, and is terminated at the bottom of the westernmost by an ordinary redoubt.

THE Afghans are the indigenous possessors of a tract of country, which stretches from the mountains of Tartary to certain parts of the gulf of Cambay and Persia; and from the Indus to the confines of Persia. The inhabitants of this wide domain, have no written character and speak a language peculiar to themselves. They are a robust, hardy race of men, and being generally addicted to a state of predatory warfare, their manners largely partake of a barbarous insolence, and they avow a fixed contempt for the occupations of civil life. Though in some of our histories of Asia, the natives of Afghanistan are denominated Tartars, I am prompted to say, that they bear no resemblance to those people, either in their persons, manners, or language.

CERTAIN territories of Afghanistan, were conquered in the ninth century by the khans of Bochara, of the Samani race, and annexed to the Tartar principality of Khorasan, from whence a subordinate chief was deputed to govern at Guizni. But it does not appear that the northern quarter of the country was subdued until the reign of Mahmoud,* the second prince of the Giznavi dynasty, who completed the conquest of Afghanistan. No substantial tradition of the Afghans or the state of their country is

* He reigned in the eleventh century

found on record, until the year of the christian æra, 997, when Sabuctagi, a Tartar officer, in the service of the chief of Khorasan, who was subject at that period to Munfur at Samani,* the great khan of Bochara, having at his master's death, succeeded to the territory, renounced the Tartar vassalage, and extending his conquests to Afghanistan, made Ghizni the capital of his empire.

THE Ghiznavi dominion, which involved a large portion of Persia and Hindostan, acquired chiefly by the arms of Mahmoud, the son of Sabuctagi, flourished for the space of two hundred and seven years, when it was wrested from Kufro, the last of the race of Sabuctagi, by the Afghan Mohomed Ghor.† This prince bequeathed to Eldoze, a favorite slave, his possessions west of the Indus, which were quickly overrun by a Persian prince of Kharism, whose successor Tillal-ud-Dein, was compelled to fly before the victorious sword of Zinzis.‡

FROM the period of that revolution, till the invasion of Timur Beg, the history of the Afghans is immersed in general obscurity; and little satisfactory knowledge of their government has been communicated to us, except by Ferishta, who says that in the year 1251, Mahmoud, a Patan, king of Dehli, drove the Moghul Tar-

* The fifth prince of that dynasty.

† So called from Ghor a district or principal town, in the northern town in the northern part of Afghanistan.

‡ This event happened about the year 1242.

tars from Ghizni, and annexed it to the empire of Hindoostan. It is probable, that it continued subject to the dominion of Delhi, until the expedition of Timur's into India, when the northern quarter of Afghanistan became a Tartar province.

As the great empire of Tartary fell into rapid decay on the death of Timur, and no relation being given of the subsequent existence of a Tartar government in Afghanistan, we may infer that it was ruled by its national chiefs until the year 1506, at which period, Baber, previously to his conquest of Hindoostan, seized on Kabul and Ghizni, which occasionally with Kandahar, were held by his posterity for the space of two hundred and thirty one years, when Nadir Shah annexed them to the dominion of Persia.

In arranging those heads of Afghan history, it may not be superfluous to note, that Mahmoud Ghorî, bequeathed his territory east of the Indus to a slave, whom he had adopted, named Kultub Ul Dein, the first Afghan or Patan* king of Dehli, from whom a succession of princes of the same nation, continued to reign for near three hundred years, and ended in Ibrahim, of the house of Lodi; who was slain in battle by Baber. The materials of this sketch, which are taken from Shirrifud Dein's memoirs of Timur, Dowe's History of Hindoostan, and private desultory remarks, will not, I fear, communicate much useful information. For the want

* The race of Afghans are commonly known in India by the name of Patans, the meaning or etymology of which designation does not seem to be ascertained.

indeed

indeed of any native record, and the superficial manner in which the subject has been treated by foreign writers, little substantial matter can now exist for the construction of the history of the Afghans. Yet the loss is the more easily consoled, when it is considered, that little instruction or pleasure can arise to the mind, from reviewing the actions of a race of men enveloped in savage ignorance, and stigmatised even by the fierce Tartars for their cruelty and rapine.

THE Afghans received the religion of Mahomet from their Tartar conquerors, and like them professing the Sooni creed, are avowed enemies to the Schias, or the Sectaries of Ali. Though many of the tribes must have been converted at the period of the Ghizni dynasty, it is seen that Timur encountered a fierce body of this nation, whom he denominated infidels. At this day, the Afghans are esteemed the least correct of the Mahometans in religious observances; and few of them are conversant in foreign letters. Their common dress consists of a shirt, which falls over the upper part of long and narrow trowsers; a woollen vest, fitted closely to the body, and reaching to the mid-leg, and a high turned up cap, of broad cloth or cotton, usually of one colour, and of a conic form; with two small parallel flits in the upper edge of its facing. Bread of wheat and barley, milk, butter and cheese, compose the common diet of the Afghans; they also, in the winter season and on a journey, make frequent use of a food called croat, which is curdled milk formed into small balls, hardened either by the heat of the sun or fire;

fire; this, when dissolved in warm water and mixed with bread, becomes equally favourable and nourishing. Their butter and cheese, are invariably made of the milk of sheep, which in this country, is said to be better adapted to the purpose than that of Kine. The cheese I thought of a good quality, though this opinion might have arisen from my long usage to a course of slender diet.

THE customs of the Afghans, agreeably to the cursory observations I made, seem in all the greater lines, similar to those of other Mahometan nations; with that difference which necessarily arises from climate, and from the disposition of a rude and polite people. Their women are concealed, though not in a very rigid manner; nor are they so much devoted to the pleasures of the harem, as the Indians, Persians, or Turks. They avow an abhorrence of that unnatural passion to which many of the Mahometan sects are addicted; and the perpetrators are punished with severity.

THE government of the Afghans, must ever receive a weighty bias from the genius of their ruler, and the degree of authority he may possess. But when not constrained, as in the present reign, by some extraordinary power or capacity of the prince, they disperse into societies, and are guided by the ruder principles of a feudal constitution. Conformably to this system, the different chieftains usually reside in fortified villages, where they exercise an acknowledged, though a moderate sway over their vassals, and yield a careless obedience to the orders of government. Rarely any appeal is made to the head of the state, except in cases which may involve

involve a common danger; when I have seen the authority of the Shah interposed with success.

THE land-holders are assessed, according to their capacity, in a stipulated sum, which is paid into the public treasury; but as it is known that the demand of a large tax would be resisted, the government is temperate and lenient in its treatment of the native Afghan subjects.

THE armies of the empire are composed of a diversity of nations; but the best troops are drawn from the Afghan districts; each of which, on the event of service, furnish a stated quota at a low rate, and look for a greater reward in chance of war. The cities and towns are chiefly inhabited by Hindoos and Mahometans of the Punjab, who were established by the former princes of Hindostan, to introduce commerce and civilization into their western provinces; many families of Tartar and Persian extraction are also dispersed through different parts of Afghanistan. The latter are denominated Parsewauns, the other Moguls;* but they have both adopted the use of the Persian language; and it may not be superfluous to observe, that the Tartar † conquerors of India, a descendant of whom still sits on the throne of Dehli, made the Persian character and language the common medium of record and

* The traders in horses and fruits, who make annual journies into India, are chiefly of this joint class

† The Turkish is the vernacular language of that region of Tartary, which gave birth to the race of Timur.

correspondence, throughout their dominion; an usage at this day preserved in all the Mahometan states of Hindostan.

To throw some light on the modern history of Afghanistan, it is necessary to describe some events which were produced in that quarter and in Persia, previously to the invasion of Nadir Shah.

ABOUT the year 1720, an army of Afghans, commanded by Mahmud, the son of Meervais, a chieftain of Kandahar, invaded Persia, and after a series of successes, he became possessed of Ispahan, the sultan Huseyn with all his sons, except Thamas Mirza, who made his escape, were made prisoners. Mahmud held possession of the capital and the southern provinces until his death, when the succession devolved on Ashruff, an Afghan of the same tribe, who in the year 1730, continued to exercise a sovereign power in the interior parts of the country. About this period, Thamas Mirza, who had fled from the Afghan arms, raised a body of military adherents, and ultimately aided by the prowess of Nadir his principle officer, made a vigorous attack upon the Afghan usurper; Ashruff maintained some obstinate conflicts with the Persian army, which was wholly commanded by Nadir, the most intrepid and successful soldier of the east; but he was compelled to yield to the superior genius of his enemy, and in retiring towards Kandahar with not more than a hundred men, he was attacked by a party of his marauding countrymen, and cut off after a desperate defence.

A POW-

A POWERFUL sect of Afghans, denominated Abdali, encouraged by the distracted state of Persia, had seized on Herat,* a large fortified city in Khorasan, and were preparing to reduce the province, when they were encountered by Nadir, who totally routed their army; fifteen thousand, it is said, being killed and wounded, and five thousand made prisoners. Having recovered the territories, which the Turks and Russians had dismembered from Persia during the weak reign of Huseyn, and expelled the Afghans, Nadir Shah deposed Thamas, and entering Afghanistan in the year 1737 with a large army, laid siege to the strong fortress of Kandahar, which was at that time held by Huseyn Khan, an independent Afghan chief. The exertions of this officer, aided by the natural advantages of his situation, detained the Persian in the vicinity of Kandahar, for the space of eighteen months. At the surrender of the fortress and other adjacent strong holds, Nadir made so temperate a use of his victory, that about four thousand Afghans, commanded by two of the officers of Huseyn, were induced to join his army; and it is mentioned that these troops, during the Indian expedition, rendered him essential service.

In the annals of that period, I have made diligent search for the name of Abdali Ahmed Khan, the founder of the modern empire of Afghanistan; but I have not been able to procure any accurate information of his origin or military progress, until he

* Supposed to be Aria of the ancients.

started forth with so brilliant a success at the death of Nadir Shah. That he was an Afghan there is no doubt, as the fact is fully proved in the person of his son Timur Shah; yet from Dowe's history; he has been brought into our notice by the name of the Persian Abdalli; by various records and oral tradition of the life of Nadir Shah, it is seen that he maintained a party of Afghans in his service, and having received in the latter period of his reign, a general testimony of the disaffection and meditated treachery of his Persian officers, he resolved to reduce them to obedience, or cut them off by the assistance of his foreign Troops; among whom, the Afghans, then, commanded by Ahmed Khan, were distinguished by pre-eminent marks of favor.

THE assassination of Nadir, was immediately followed by a furious attack on the Afghan troops, consisting of four or five thousand men; but their intrepid chief, though assailed by the whole Persian army, effected a safe retreat into his own country, where, seizing on a large treasure which the governor of Kabul, not yet apprized of the fate of Nadir, had dispatched to the Persian camp, and raising a numerous force, he was acknowledged the sovereign of the Afghan territories, by the title of Ahmed Shah. After establishing his authority at home, he penetrated into the northern quarters of India, which felt the force of his arm, and long groaned under the Afghan desolation.

AHMED SHAH having run through a long and arduous military career, and acquired even the character of a temperate and just

just prince, died in the year 1773, in the vicinity of the new city of Kandahar,* which he had designed to be the capital of Afghanistan. This prince was succeeded by his son Timur, who keeps his court in the city of Kabul; to preserve the foreign possessions of his father, he made in the first part of his reign, some desultory expeditions into India; but on the issue of an unsuccessful campaign with the Sicques, he was compelled to relinquish the whole of the Punjab territory. At this day he retains, on the east side of the Indus, the principality of Kashmire, the district of Attock, with some scattered divisions of Moultan, including the city and the territory of Scind. Yet Timur Shah derives but few real advantages from his Indian domain. Scind at the period of my journey, was in a degree dismembered from his empire; no revenue had been remitted to Kabul for the space of two years, or any measure adopted to enforce obedience. And the governor of Moultan, confiding on his remote distance from the empire and the inactive disposition, of the prince, shews only that attention to the orders of government, which is most accordant with his purposes. From this outline you will perceive, that the Afghan dominion in India, does not stand on a flourishing ground; that under the auspices of Timur, few marks of its extension are evinced; or that it imparts any leading influence in the affairs of Hindostan.

* Nadir Shah destroyed the old fortress of Kandahar, which stood on the top of a high rocky hill, and founded on a contiguous plain, a city entitled Nadirabad; it was completed by Ahmed Shah, and is now only known by the name of Kandahar.

RUMOURS wafted from the court of Dehli, have occasionally agitated our quarter of India, and taught us to believe that Timur with a mighty host, had crossed the Indus, and was making rapid marches to Dehli, to restore the lost authority of the Moghul empire. But this is an empty tale, framed to raise the spirits of a decaying drooping court, or amuse the dreaming politicians of the day. It is indeed, so opposite to the truth, that the Afghan prince, instead of urging a foreign enterprize, seems afraid to move from his capital.* At this time a common outcry of the soldiery prevails against the Shah, for a large failure of military payments; and it appears that since the year 1780, when he visited Peshour, where he was treacherously attacked by a party of disaffected Afghans, he has shewn no desire of leaving Kabul.†

* Since that period Timur Shah, has appeared in the field and proceeded to the province of Moultan; but his operations, futile and indecisive, have terminated after much negociation and threat, in a manifest incapacity to complete the reduction of a nominal tributary; and having dissolved the charm that popular opinion had impressed on his name, he returned ingloriously into his own country.

Note by the Editors.

† Some recent advices from India mention, that in the autumn of 1796, Zemaun Shah, the successor of Timur, had invaded the Punjab, and having completely routed the forces of the Sicques, had gained possession of Lahore; but was soon after recalled from thence to Kandahar by a rebellion excited there, during his absence, by a discontented chief, named Morad Khan. These accounts add that he was supposed to have suppressed this insurrection, and to be preparing to re-enter India with a very considerable army.

EXCLU-

EXCLUSIVE of his Afghan and Indian dominions, Timur Shah is possessed of a large division of Khorasan, which taking in the city of Herat, extends on the north to the vicinity of Nishabor and Turshish, and on the south to the lesser Irak. This prince, whom I have seen, is about forty six years of age, his person is above the middle size and rather corpulent; and, for a native of Afghanistan, his complexion is dark. In token of imperial dignity, he wears on days of ceremony, a high cap of black velvet, with a top of a quadrangular form.

FROM a want of vigor in the government, a thin population, and the aversion of the Afghans to civil occupations, the revenue of Timur Shah bears an inadequate proportion to the extent of his dominion. In Mr. Dowe's History of Hindostan, it is said that Ahmed Shah possessed a revenue of three millions sterling, and maintained a standing body of one hundred thousand cavalry. If such was the state of that prince's power and resources, it hath greatly decreased in the reign of his successor; whose whole force according to the information I procured in the country, does not exceed thirty thousand men, or his revenue a million of our money.

CAVALRY constitutes the chief military strength of Afghanistan, which as well from its own districts, as its contiguity to Tartary and Persia, procures good horses,* at a moderate rate.

* A serviceable horse is procured at Kabul, from five to six pounds sterling.

A corps

A corps of infantry armed with matchlocks, composes also a part of the Afghan army ; but, as in countries where cavalry is formed of the higher classes of the people and denominates military honor and rank, this body is held in low account, and is little superior to the undisciplined soldiery of India ; and the Afghan artillery, may without depreciating it, be estimated by the same scale of comparison. Certain of the brothers of Timur Shah have raised occasional commotions in the government, and one of them named Sicunder, was in open rebellion, but it was quelled without producing any violent effect. This prince who hitherto experiences the obedience and filial duty of his own family, has appointed two of his sons, grown to manhood, to the separate charge of Kandahar and Herat ; both of them live in harmony with their father and are esteemed by the people.

THE remains of a colony of Armenians, which Nadir Shah had captured in his Turkish war, and established in the northern parts of Persia, whence it was removed by Ahmed Shah into Afghanistan, are now residing at Kabul. They intermarry with their own women and are allowed the free use of the christian religion, which is administered by a national priest. They were attached to the body-guard of the late Shah, whom they attended in his various expeditions ; and those who survived, amounting to about one hundred, were sometime employed by Timur in the like capacity ; but, since this prince has personally relinquished the pursuits of a military life, and neglected

neglected the maintenance of his army, the Armenians have fallen into great penury. They reside with their families in the precincts of the Balau Sir, and are permitted within a prescribed limit, to exercise discretionary occupations. Yet with all the industry which the tribe so abundantly possesses, they earn but a scanty pittance. In despite of this grievance of the gloomy sorrow pressed on them by poverty, by a condition of bondage, to which on this side of mortality, the most sanguine hope can fix no termination, they evince an unremitting activity in propagating their species : and would seem determined to entail on their race, an equal portion of that misery, which has so largely fallen to their lot.

FROM what has been already noticed, it were almost superfluous to say that Timur Shah possesses little enterprize or vigor of mind. For the last seven years, he has shewn little inclination to military action, or the aggrandisement of his Empire. It is true, that allured by the hope of acquiring an easy possession of one of the best cities, now remaining in Persia, he sent a body of troops to besiege Muschid, the capital of Khorasan ; but, the wretched equipment of his army and the slow progress of the siege, which was commenced in the preceding year, equally shew a want of spirit and ability.

THE Afghan government, when viewed as standing on a general basis of despotism, and compared with that of other Asiatic states, is not pregnant with injustice or cruelty. Its edicts are
feldom

feldom accompanied with bloodshed, nor is it inimical to any sect of strangers. The foreign and native merchants, enjoy at Kabul an ample protection, and maintain their rights with a spirit, rarely seen in a Mahometan country. Capital punishments are seldom inflicted, and though the kinsmen of the Prince have formed frequent conspiracies against the state, his hands are not stained with the blood of his family. Such are the virtues of Timur Shah, which were exemplified in various instances, during my residence at his capital. The ruling vice of this prince is avarice; from a dread of the fierce and untractable spirit of the Afghans, its effects are not severely felt in the collection of the territorial revenue; but it presses hard on the soldiery and household servants; on artificers, and on those merchants who unwarily vend their wares to the court without prompt payment. The facts, however desultory, that have been adduced, do not warrant the opinion that Timur Shah is an object of dread to the bordering states, or that he is justly entitled, the comet of the east, who we have been taught to believe, will at some unexpected moment, shoot across the Indus and the Ganges, and consume even our remote province of Bengal.

THE chief strength of the Afghan prince, I presume to say, is derived from the weakness and discord of his neighbours. Were the Sicque chiefs not more apprehensive of a domestic increasing influence, than desirous of subduing a constitutional enemy, they would, it may be fairly inferred, speedily extinguish the Afghan
mobal government

government in India ; and should the Persian force be thrown into a body, under the conduct of an able leader, it is not only probable, that the dismembered division of Khorasan would revert to its ancient possessors, but that the Afghans would again feel a foreign yoke.—With an earnest apology for this long letter, I remain,

DEAR SIR,

Yours, &c.

HAVING in vain endeavored to procure payment of my defaced bill, I sold it at half price to Hagdair, my Georgian host, who agreed to abide by the chance of obtaining the full amount. God forgive me for doubting the integrity of my Christian host ; but, some obscure parts of the negotiation, and the exorbitant prices, charged upon sundry articles which I purchased from him, induced me to believe, that he had not played me fair. To throw rash blame on a man, who had rendered me such essential offices of hospitality, and who is cut off from every help of vindication, were a breach of one of the grand bonds of society. Nor had this suspicion been communicated, did it not lead to substitute an observation I have often made ; that a man, though devoted to the strict observance of the minutest ceremony of his religion, with a mind sensibly fixed on objects lying beyond mortality, who, like the Georgian, loudly chants his morning and evening prayers, and on his knees, numbers a long list of martyred saints, shall at the

foreign yoke.—With an earnest apology for this long letter, I

Yours, &c.

LETTER XIV.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING in vain endeavoured to procure payment of my defaced bill, I sold it at half price to Bagdasir, my Georgian host, who agreed to abide by the chance of obtaining the full amount. God forgive me for doubting the integrity of my Christian host; but, some obscure parts of the negociation, and the exorbitant prices, charged upon fundry articles which I purchased from him, induced me to believe, that he had not played me fair. To throw rash blame on a man, who had rendered me such essential offices of humanity, and who, is cut off from every help of vindication, were a breach of one of the grand bonds of society. Nor had this suspicion been communicated, did it not lead to substantiate an observation I have often made; that a man, though devoted to the strict observance of the minutest ceremony of his religion, with a mind ostensibly fixed on objects lying beyond mortality, who, like the Georgian, loudly chants his morning and evening prayers, and on his beads, numbers a long list of martyred saints, shall at the

same time, eagerly grasp at every advantage, which our world holds out to him; nor shall he give even farthings to the poor. This covering has happily in the civilized world, become threadbare and flimsy, and except in fanatic conventicles, is seldom exhibited with success.

HAVING made the requisite preparations for my journey, and hired one side of a camel, on which a pannier was suspended for my accommodation, I joined a party proceeding to Kandahar.

ON the first September, at Killah Kazzee, the remains of a fort, three fursungs* distant from Kabul. This being a kafilah of camels, which in Afghanistan and Persia, are usually driven in the night, that the heat of the day and the effects of thirst, may be less felt, we departed on the evening of the 22d, and early next morning halted on a barren plain, five fursungs. The road lay through scattered hills of a moderate height, and a country thinly cultivated.

IT is necessary to inform you, that I now appeared in the character of a Christian, conformably to the counsel of Bagdasir, who had confidently assured me that no risque would be incurred under such description; and, he expatiated also on the grievous sin of throwing out any false colours on the score of religion. But it

* Throughout this quarter of Afghanistan and all the dominion of Persia, the land measurement is calculated by fursungs, which may be roundly computed, at four English miles. In some of the ancient authors, this measurement is termed parasang, agreeably to the alphabet of the old Persic in which the letter F is not contained.

was soon seen that the exchange involved a multiplicity of troubles. Never perhaps, did the meek and patient member of primitive Christianity suffer, among the Gentiles, greater indignity or more bitter reproach; martyrdom only was withheld; and that extremity of Christian honor, I was in perpetual dread of; though without any foretaste of those comforts, which flow from ardent zeal, or a consolatory belief that the church would derive either strength or credit from my sufferings.

THE mode of travelling, which I had now adopted being probably unknown to you, I will give it as it deserves, a rough description. The camel appropriated to the accommodation of passengers, carries two persons, who are lodged in a kind of pannier laid loosely on the back of the animal. The pannier, termed in the Persic, *kidjahwah*, is a wooden frame, with the sides and bottom of netted cords of about three feet long and two broad, and two in depth. The necessaries of the passengers are conveyed in the *kidjahwah*, and the journey being usually made in the night-time, it becomes the only place of his rest; for on the *kafilah's* arrival at his station, he must, immediately exert himself in procuring provisions, water and fuel; also in keeping an eye over his property to prevent theft. Had I been even much accustomed to this manner of travelling, it must have been irksome; but a total want of practice, made it excessively grievous. That you may not think my complaints ill-founded, or that I possess the ingenious though unhappy talent of creating
cala-

calamities, I will lay before you a simple detail of facts. The box which I occupied, measured a length of two feet seven inches, with a breadth of one foot and a half; and my height being five feet and nearly ten inches, you will necessarily grant that equal address and force were required, to pack me in so disproportionate a compass. On reconnoitering the other side of the camel, I discovered, which alarmed me, an old woman and an infant. My fears indeed were soon verified, by the child beginning to cry and the nurse to scold; nor did the alternate strain cease the whole night. Our camel, too, was the worst conditioned of the drove; and a want of strength made the poor animal stumble and very restive. His ill properties did not remain long concealed; for, before the party had crept into their seats, the camel, which is accustomed to receive its burthen, in a kneeling posture, suddenly arose, when I, the nurse and child, with our various stock of equipment, fell to the ground in wide confusion; I then first experienced a taste of those ills, which are attached to the profession of Christian faith, in Mahometan countries.

THE camel driver, an Afghan of the rudest cast, reprobated me in severe terms as the cause of the mishap; but, he could expect no good fortune, he said, whilst in the society of an infidel, to whom, only, were to be attributed the false steps, and numerous they were, of the camel. With much joy I discovered, at the dawn of day, our halting place, where I was relieved

lieved from a complication of discordant sounds, and a cramp which had benumbed all my body.

AT Kabul I had endeavoured to procure a servant, knowing that in my present character, I should suffer much inconveniency without such an assistant. But Bagdasir was averse to the measure, observing that no Mahometan of character would enter my service, and that those who had overcome their scruples would rob me. Waving therefore so dangerous an accommodation, I commenced the journey, with a resolution of boldly facing every difficulty; yet to obtain the camel driver's good will, I paid him more than the usual hire.

On the 24th, in the morning, at Azeeabad, five fursungs. The country, which I reviewed at day-break, was interspersed with low hills, and generally cultivated. Having now distinctly noticed our party, I perceived that Dowran, the name of the conductor, who plumed himself on being of the same tribe as Timur Shah, had with him a younger brother for a helper, and five camels; three of which carried merchandize, and two, passengers. The cargo of one of these having been described, it remains to say, that on the other sat an old Afghan lady of some distinction, her daughter, very handsome, and two grand children. The dame began an early contest with Dowran, but after some smart skirmishes, she gained a compleat victory over the driver, who sat down easy under the defeat, by observing that

that the lady had sprung from a noble race, and that the shrillness of her voice made his head ache.

ON the 25th, halted near a small fort, four fursungs. The night air was very cold, and the country presented the barren aspect of a bare plain, on which were scattered hills of rock and sand. Dowran's refusal of all assistance, on the score of my being an infidel and thereby unclean, obliged me to go daily in search of water and the dried dung* of camels, the only fuel of these parts, the kindling of which excited an excruciating pain in my eyes. But having fortunately laid in a small stock of biscuit, tea and sugar, I subsisted without much labour of cookery. This was I think, the first period of my life, in which to use a trite phrase, I had been thrown wholly on my back; for in the first part of my journey, I usually fared better than my companions. My manner was then confident, and the rough plenty of my board, procured many attentive adherents. The reverse now befell me, I was treated on all sides with such a brutal contempt, and experienced from a want of every help so many embarrassments, that I grievously lamented the dismissal of my Mahometan covering; which I resolved to take up on the most favorable occasion.

THE Armenians, in the course of journeying, are neither sub-

* For the purpose of collecting this fuel, kafilahs seldom vary their stations.

ject to the grievances which affected me ; nor do they feel with much sensibility the insults of the Mahometans ; and by chiefly travelling with associates of their own nation, a mutual aid is afforded ; besides these advantages, they possess a flexibility of manners, which receives a form from every people with whom they mix. I have seen them manage with infinite address, the Hindoo, the Mahometan, and even the Jew ; a race whom they affect, on a religious principle to hold in abhorrence ; but the grand cause of their hatred, is a close commercial rivalry. Treatment, at which an Armenian would have smiled or endured with profound submission, I should either by my hands, or at least my tongue, have warmly resented : for though not ill versed in the manners of the east, I never had sufficient forbearance to submit to the reproachful insolence which the Mahometans, especially the vulgar, exercise towards those of a different faith.

DOWRAN, from my awkwardness in all culinary matters, and a want of strength to assist in loading his camels, the only qualities in his mind, constituting an useful man, conceived a contemptible opinion of me, which he thought could not be more forcibly expressed, than circulating a report in the kafilah that I was a Jew. This was a new battery opened against me, but having procured the protection of the old Afghan lady, by fondling the children and giving them sugar, I successfully combated Dowran, who had now altogether submitted to a female government.

On the 26th, at Ghizni, four fursungs. This city remained

the capital of an extensive, powerful empire for the space of four hundred years, and according to the historian Ferishta, was adorned by the Ghiznavi princes, particularly the great Mahmoud, with many a sumptuous and stately pile. But, ah! what humiliating sorrow did I feel, how quickly did every spark of the pride incident to humanity subside, on beholding the fallen state of Ghizni! In vain did I look for its "gorgeous palaces and cloud capt towers." They had been long levelled with the dust, and save some scattered masses of mishapen ruins, not a monument is to be seen of Ghizni's former grandeur. The town stands on a hill of moderate height, at the foot of which runs a small river,* whose borders are occupied by some fruit gardens. Its slender existence is now maintained by some Hindoo families, who support a small traffick, and supply the wants of a few Mahometan residents.

At a short distance from Ghizni, stands the tomb of Mahmoud, where pilgrims resort from distant places to say their prayers. But as the religious acts of such emigrants are rated by the degree of labour, length or danger of their journies, we are not to suppose that the pilgrimage improves either their heads or their hearts: though few moral benefits may accrue to the devotee from his wanderings, he derives from them a considerable portion of secular advantage. The Hadji, so he is

* Its current passes to the west or southward, but I am not acquainted with its name.

entitled, who has made the tour of Mecca, and visited the tomb of his prophet, is ever after treated with a respectful deference, for it is the top of Mahometan fashion to be religious; and if a mendicant, his scrip never wants a store.

In mentioning Mahmoud and Ghizni, it were criminal to omit the name of the Persian poet, Fardoufi, who in his Sha Namah, hath given us a splendid monument of epic poetry, and the pure language of his country. The protection of the great doth not always fall to the poet's lot; nor but rarely doth the public munificence enable him to indulge the bent of his genius. Gripping want often drives him to seek the hireling's pittance, and even in our enlightened land, we have seen the cold hand of penury press him to the grave. More propitious was the fortune of Ferdoufi: it gave him an imperial patron in Mahmoud, whose praise he too lavishly sung. And when, for some failure of the prince's promise, the poet retired into Persia, his countrymen warmly vied in manifesting their liberality and applause.

THE climate of Ghizni is so cold as to have become proverbial, and the Afghans told me, that the town has more than once been overwhelmed in snow. The road to Ghizni has, I apprehend, a south west direction, and is distant from Kabul eighty two miles, at the rate of four miles to a fursung. I have been the more induced to notice this fact circumstantially; as in our maps its distance and course from Kabul is erroneously laid down; some

of the French geographers, even place it to the westward of Kandahar.

IN the morning of the 27th of September, at Heer Ghut, five fursungs. The country is interspersed with low hills, and produces, except in some few cultivated spots, little else than a prickly aromatic weed, on which camels feed with avidity; and which with paste of unsifted barley formed into balls, constitutes their common food. This animal is peculiarly useful in countries where, as in Afghanistan, the roads are level, the soil dry, and provender, from the thin population, generally scarce. The camel even on much coarser fare than has been mentioned, endures severe fatigue, often carrying a load of eight hundred English pounds; and has so tractable a temper, that eight of them fastened to each other in a string, are managed by two men. When oppressed with thirst on the road, a camel throws from its stomach a fleshy substance of a purple colour, which either returns a supply of water that has been previously deposited, or being put into friction in the mouth, yields such moisture as gives it occasional relief.

ON the 27th, our party halted at the instance of Dowran wholly; that is, without the previous assent of the old lady, who inveighed against his presumption with such bitterness and so loudly, that stopping his ears, he ran off the field. You will please to observe, that the places noted as halting stations, take their name either from some adjacent fort, or if in an uninhabited country, from some peculiar aspect or quality they may possess.

ON

ON the 29th, at Meercoot, fix fursungs. The air had become now so cold, that at this period of the year, and in a latitude between thirty-four and thirty-five, the water which was suspended in a copper vessel from my camel, became solidly frozen during the night.

ON the 30th, at Mushiedah, in a desert, fix fursungs. In traversing so inhospitable a tract, little matter of information or amusement can occur to the traveller. But had he been journeying over a land stored with every gift and every beauty of nature, a companion like mine would have destroyed his joy and have converted his Eden to a desert. The nurse of the crying child was the immediate reverse of an handsome woman; on this score she was not responsible, and had she been moderately clean, I had no right to complain, and might even have derived entertainment from her talk which flowed with a strong current. But trusting wholly to this qualification for a passage through life, she seemed to despise every other care. Her hair was a complicated maze of filth, which had never I believe been explored by comb, and from whose close vicinity I received a severe visitation; nor was her face while I knew her, once touched by water.

ON the first of November, at Tazee, five fursungs, in a barren track. The air became now very hot in the day, and cold at night.

ON the 2d, at Killaut, a fort on an eminence, fix fursungs. This quarter of Afghanistan has the general aspect of a desert; and

and except some small portions of arable land contiguous to the places of habitation no other cultivation is seen.

ON the 23d at Teer Andazee, six fursungs. The night air, hitherto cold and bleak, became at this place mild, and the heat of the day oppressive.

ON the 4th at Potee, a small village, situate in a populous and fertile district. Potee lyes to the right of the Kandahar road, but holding some dependance on our Afghan lady, the two camels that carried the family and me, were dispatched, for her accommodation, to that place, where she was received with much respect. Whether the old lady had imagined, that the humble predicament in which I stood, would deter me from any attempt to fully the honor of her family, or that she had noticed in me, a total indifference to all its motions, I know not, but the truth was, she made as little account of me, as if I had been wholly incapacitated from entailing on it any disgrace. Nor, did I, so temperate had my constitution become, from the predominance of other pursuits, feel the least mortification at the treatment.

On the 5th in an open well cultivated plain, six fursungs, where halting for a few hours, the kafilah proceeded two and a half fursungs farther to Kandahar. This city, comprised within an ordinary fortification of about three miles in circumference, and of a square form, is populous and flourishing. And lying in

in the great road, which connects India with Persia and Tartary, has been long a distinguished mart.

At Kandahar, are established many Hindoo families, chiefly of Moultan and the Rajepoot districts, who by their industry and mercantile knowledge, have essentially augmented its trade and wealth. The Turcoman merchants of Bochara and Samarkand, also frequent this mart, whence they transport into their own country a considerable quantity of indigo, with which commodity Kandahar is annually supplied from various parts of upper India. This city is more abundantly supplied with provisions and at a cheaper rate, than any place I have seen on the west side of the Indus. The grapes and melons of numerous kinds are peculiarly high flavoured, and are comparable with the first fruits of Europe. The extensive range of shops occupied by Hindoo traders, with the ease and contentment expressed in their deportment, affords a fair testimony of their enjoying at Kandahar, liberty and protection.

A son of Timur Shah governs the city with a tract of dependant territory, which produces it is said, a revenue of eighteen lacks of rupees; and it may be justly concluded from the appearance of all classes of people, that this collection is made without any extraordinary rigour. The environs of Kandahar occupy an extensive plain, covered with fruit gardens and cultivation, which are intersected with numerous streams, of so excellent a quality as to become proverbial; and the climate is happily

happily tempered, between the heats of India and the cold of Ghizni.

It is generally supposed in Europe that Kandahar stands in a country of mountains, and we speak of the lofty passes of Kandahar, as a point not less clearly ascertained than the existence of the Alps. Permit me to rectify this popular error, which, like many of a similar texture, has made mountains of mole-hills, and acquaint you that the face of the country surrounding the new city of Kandahar, forms an extensive plain, which as it approaches the site of the old fortress, becomes interspersed with hills; but they are of a moderate height; nor, do they form any barrier of difficult access or deep extent.

On leaving Kabul, Bagdasir, my Georgian host, had given me introductory letters to two Turkish residents of Kandahar; the one kept a small shop in the bazar, the other, Aga Ahmed, had a warehouse of some note in the karavansera. This person received me in a courteous manner, and though then in the character of a Christian, I did not experience any of that haughtiness of manner, with which Mahometans usually regard those of our faith. He even directed his countryman the shopkeeper, to provide the necessaries for my journey, and to carefully guard against any fraud.

The immediate departure of a kafilah, and the fast approach of winter, when the road to Persia is impassable, determined me to proceed to Herat; though I wished much for a few days residence

fidence at Kandahar. Aga Ahmed made an agreement with the kafilah bashi* for my passage, and also that I should be furnished with an attendant: this benevolent Turk did not formally recommend me to the director's care, but enjoined him on the forfeiture of his favor to shew me a particular kindness, which was only to be testified by producing my written assurance. Could I have found a fit associate to divide the cares of house-keeping, I would have remained at Kandahar, during the winter, as I still felt the effects of the late sickness, and feared a relapse from the fatigue of travelling; but the predicament in which I stood, wholly precluded any domestic connection with the Mahometans; and that of some stray Armenians, whom I found there, did not seem eligible.

THE road from Ghizni to Kandahar, according to my gross observations, tends to the south-west; and the country has generally a barren aspect, with a scanty supply of wood and water. The buildings from a scarcity of timber, are constructed as in the Kabul districts, of sun-burnt bricks, and covered with a flat arched roof of the like materials.

ON the 8th of November left Kandahar, and proceeded to Koby, three fursungs, a small village surrounded by a fertile plain. At the distance of two or three miles to the northward

* Bash in the Turkish language signifies head, and is often applied in Persia to the head of a society or party.

of Kandahar, is seen on the left the remains of the old fortress, standing on the summit of a rocky hill of a moderate height, but abrupt elevation. The road at this place tends over a stony ascent of easy access, skirted on each side with scattered hills and wide intervals of level land. It is the form of this part of Afghanistan, which has given rise, I apprehend, to the European belief of the mountains and passes of Kandahar.

ON the 9th, at Aufkuckana, three fursungs, a small village on a thinly cultivated plain. Our slow progress was occasioned by the kafilah bashi remaining at the city to adjust some business; he had however wholly neglected mine, for not a person when my sect was known, would even touch my garment.

My ill fortune on the score of an associate, which seemed to pursue me with an inveterate rigor, had now given me in the place of the scolding nurse and crying child, a theological and very clamorous disputant. This bewildered man, unhappily for himself and for his neighbours, had conned over some of those books of ingenious devices and quaint syllogisms, which are held in high note among the modern Mahometans, and have fixed among them a false distorted taste. Even Hafis's poems, so conspicuously replete with wit, and with incitements to mere mortal pleasures, are tortured by them into praises of Mahomet and his religion. This fanatical logician was unknown to the other passengers, but he lost no time in displaying to them his
store

store of endowments, and seeing me a favorable subject he directed his full force at my head.

I HAD engaged the services of a travelling Arab taylor, and was anticipating the various conveniencies which they promised, when he was driven from the prospect of an easy livelihood by the threats of the logician, who denounced Mahomet's vengeance against him if he eat the bread of an infidel. The poor man, hungry, and almost naked, started at the danger, and fearful of incurring so powerful a wrath, resigned his new office, and went to live as it might please god. Thus had I the dreary prospect of being pestered for the term of twenty days by this outrageous Mahometan, who so far from being conscious of any mischief, believed that he was performing an act of extensive merit.

ON the evening of the 10th, the kafilah moved, and arrived the next morning at Howrah Muddit Khan,* six fursangs, the country open, and the soil, a mixture of light sand and earth, producing generally that species of weed which has been noted in the remarks of the road from Kabul to Kandahar.

ON the 13th, at Khackchamparah, six fursangs. No marks of habitation were seen during the journey of these two last days.

ON the 14th, at Greishk, seven fursangs, a larged walled village, on the skirts of which runs a small stream of good water;

* Howrah signifies an artificial fountain or reservoir of water; one of which had been constructed at this place by Muddit Khan, for the accommodation of travellers.

halted two days at this place, where a toll is collected on merchandize and passengers, and where a stock of provisions was laid in to supply our consumption, through a tract of desert country extending from this station to the westward. My persecuting neighbour, had already deprived me of two servants, when after much intreaty, mixed with a warm eulogium on his extensive capacity, I prevailed on him to moderate his resentment against me, and cease to anathematise those, who might in future be induced from their necessity to eat the bread of an infidel. He had by his rhetoric, precluded me even from the use of a barber; one of whom being observed by him at the close of an operation on my head, was reprobated for his impurity in virulent language, and compelled to cleanse his razor by an ordeal process, the expence of which was defrayed by Christian-money. On paying the charge, I observed to our logician, whom I now treated with little ceremony, that he should also cause the shaver to purge the money by the like trial, that he might not be polluted by the touch; a precaution I added, that would doubtless have been adopted, but for a fear of half the amount being lost in the large alloy that debases all Mahometan coins. I was, he said, an incorrigible Kaufir, whom ill fortune had placed with him on the same camel, and which he feared could never thrive under such a weight of sin.

THE urgent calls of hunger now gave me a third servant, who was in his way from Moultan, to make the pilgrimage of Muschid.*

chid.* Think how ardent must have been the zeal which incited this pilgrim to so distant a journey, and supported him against the inclemency of winter, and the inhospitality of a rude people, with scarcely a covering to his back, no shoes to his feet, or an atom of money in his purse. Though I gave him some warm clothing and substantial food, he was not able to keep pace with our party.

His successor was a Kashmirian, who had a countenance as demure as that of Gil Blas's Ambrose Lamela, and to the extent of his ability, as great a rogue. To enhance the value of his services, for which I was obliged to pay largely, he expatiated on the sin he was about to commit, eating the salt of an infidel; but I soon found there was no restriction to his diet. Most of the Asiatic nations have affixed to salt a certain sacred property, but it is held in the highest degree of reverence by the Mahometans, who speak of salt as Europeans do of bread. A servant is said to eat the salt of his master, and when guilty of ingratitude, he is stigmatized with the name of a Nimmock Haram, or a polluter of his salt, which is, I believe, the only term applied by Mahometan nations to such an offender.

HERE I am induced to notice the ominous qualities vulgarly ascribed on some occasions to salt in our own country; as when it is accidentally spilled, some part is thrown over the left shoulder,

* It is at this day the reputed capital of Khorasan.

that

that the supposed ensuing evil may be averted; a ceremony I have seen even observed by those who were far removed from the lower classes of life. But early impressions are not easily effaced, and they often impart to the ideas a lasting colour; especially amongst those who are secluded from the more hackneyed paths of the world.

ON the 17th, at Shah Nadir, a station in the desert, seven fursungs. This reservoir built by Nadir Shah, is a square of about twenty feet, over which is erected on pillars a terrace, which extending beyond the margin of the water, affords a convenient lodging to travellers.

ON the 18th at Shorab* five fursungs; some spots of cultivation were scattered around this station, but no village in sight.

ON the 19th at Lungherah, a place of halt, in a desert country, where we found only one weak spring of water, which was quickly consumed.

ON the 20 at Dilaram, six fursungs, a fort in ruins which is skirted by a rivulet, on whose margin are seen some scattering trees; a rare sight in this land! but, the adjacent country is barren and uninhabited.

ON the 21st, at Buckwau, seven fursungs, a station in the desert.

ON the 22d, at Drauze in the desert, six fursungs.—This day

* Signifying salt or brackish water, but at this station the water was fresh.

the sun shot forth its rays with great force, and the ground which we occupied being a bare sand, reflected an intense heat. Whilst I was panting under a very flimsy covering, I observed that my neighbour, a Turkoman Seid, who had no shelter, was struck by the sun, and lay struggling in a violent agony.

THE Mahometans thought him possessed with the devil, and instead of affording any proper aid, began an extraordinary conversation with the supposed fiend; especially my learned associate who in a peremptory manner, ordered the devil to depart out of the body of a true believer, and a branch of the holy stock; but, seeing that the command had no effect, though conveyed in Arabic and a vehement tone of voice, I requested to interfere; and lifting the incumbent from the ground, threw some water on his face, and forcibly poured a quantity down his throat. The Seid soon felt the natural benefit of this administration; but the violence of the shock created a temporary stupefaction, during which he uttered so incoherent a language that it confirmed the opinion that a demon was speaking, and not the Tartar.

OUR Logician addressed the infernal personage in a very spirited harangue, severely reprehending his entrance into the body of one of the prophet's descendants, and challenging him, that the cloven foot might conspicuously appear, to repeat the Mahometan creed. To this test the shattered state of the Seid's senses were not yet equal; nor, was it until he had smoked his
pipe,

pipe, that he distinctly and with surrounding applause, pronounced his creed and shook off all diabolical connection.

ON the 23d, at Ghurmow in the desert, five fursungs. This evening my persecuting companion left our party and proceeded with some Hindoo Traders to Fera, an Afghan town of some note, lying about forty or fifty miles to the south-west of Drauze. But, my joy at this riddance, like most joys of sublunary texture, was of short duration; for the vacant place fell to the lot of a much more obnoxious associate.

I BEGIN now to be ashamed at having imposed upon you so large a portion of private story; yet, without it, I perceive my subject would be as barren as the land I travel over; which exhibits to the fatigued eye, one vast steril plain, without rivers, wood, or scarcely a place of human habitation. Though personal recitals are usually suspected of vanity, and even in their best sense partake more of the amazing than the instructive qualities, you may perhaps gather from my anecdotes, some subsidiary knowledge of the human character, an important subject, and not less various than the human face. My next associate was the Arab taylor, already mentioned, who succeeded to the vacant pannier by the assistance of one of his countrymen in our party, a trader of some note. A conversation held when I was thought asleep, some nights before, between the logician and the taylor; in which the latter was strenuously exhorted to rob me, boded no good from the change; and this counsel was strengthened by

by a doctrine, very prevalent among the lower classes of Mahometans, that it is meritorious and laudable to attack the property of an infidel. Nor was the advice lost on the taylor, who promised an active diligence in performing the required service. Combining therefore the interest of the world with that of his religion, he commenced a brisk attack on my chattels; but, which at that time my vigilance preserved. His subsequent attempts however were more successful, as were seen in the diminution of my apparel. This freebooting system of the taylor's kept me in constant alarm, and displayed every day in stronger colours, the ill consequences of my Christian garb.

On the 24th, at Ghiraunee, six fursungs. A populous walled village, situate near a small running water. Halted there the next day to make the payment of a toll, and purchase provisions for a three days journey over a desert, which reaches from this place to the confines of Khorasan. My Kashmirian servant was wholly divested of religious fervor or a religious cloak. For he neither prayed nor washed; but, was much addicted to theft; and while the taylor purloined my cloths, he was occupied in stealing my victuals. Yet this propensity was, in some degree, compensated by his services, which found active employment in bringing water and fuel, baking cakes, and boiling my coffee.

On the 27th, at Khoos, in the desert, five fursungs. The taylor's payments for conveyance not being regularly made, the seat was again put up to sale, when it was purchased by an Hin-

dostany Mahometan, who had left his wife and family at Juan-pour, in the district of Benares, and was thus far advanced on a pilgrimage to Muschid. From the mouth of this devotee, who had formerly been a marauding soldier, there issued an almost incessant ejaculation of prayer. In truth it may be said, that he overflowed in holy zeal, for he prayed and cried in a successive rotation; what an extraordinary character would this be thought in a country where its inhabitants, though shunning no peril or fatigue in the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, will scarcely cross a street to look into a Church. The various precepts of education and religion, established in the world, but, especially, the different orders of government, produce so strong a dissimilarity in the manners of men, that in investigating those of the most opposite tendency, they would seem to arise from beings of a distinct species.

ON the 28th, at Gimmuch, seven fursungs, a station in the desert.

ON the 29th, at Ouckal, a large walled village, standing within the limit of the province of Khorasan, and inhabited wholly by Persians. It is proper here to observe, that the natives of Persia proper, particularly the soldiery, are often termed at home, as in foreign countries, Kuzzel Bach; a Turkish compound, signifying, I am informed, red head, and originating from the Persian cap, being covered at the top with red cloth.

ON the 30th, a halt.

ON

ON the 31st, at Sheerbuchsh, a desert station, six fursungs.

ON the 1st of November, at Zearut Ghah, seven fursungs. A small village, on the skirts of which are seen the remains of some tombs or religious edifices.

ON the 2nd, at the city of Herat, three fursungs. The road from Kandahar to Gimmuch leads to the west or west by north; from thence to Herat, it has I apprehend, nearly a northern course, yet I cannot account for the sudden deviation of the track. The country is generally open, and interspersed with barren rocky hills of a moderate height. The soil is light and sandy, producing naturally little else than the aromatic weed before noted.

THE city of Herat stands on a spacious plain, which is intersected with many springs of running water, some of which are supplied with bridges; and the numerous villages surrounded with plantations, must afford a pleasant view to the traveller, whose eye has been wearied with the deserts of Afghanistan.

THE director of the kafilah carried us to the karavanserah, where passengers only are lodged; the other places of this description, being all occupied by resident traders. In this square of the karavansera, I perceived an Armenian, whom I informed with little ceremony, lest he should hear a less favourable story, that I was an European, returning from India into my own country: but, for greater personal security, I had assumed the name of an Armenian. And to quiet any suspicion of the truth of my relation, I produced a letter, which the Georgian, Bagdasir, had writ-

ten in my favour to an Armenian, who lived in a village about forty miles from Herat. My address was closed by observing, that though not in want of money, I stood in great need of his friendly offices, as he must be well aware of the various difficulties affecting those of our sect, especially when alone, among so bigotted a people as those of Khorasan. The Armenian heard the little oration, which all my powers of speech had pointed at him, with a resolute coolness, and perceiving, I suppose, that my acquaintance would yield no profit, he turned from me and went away, without even expressing the common terms of civility. The frequent occasions which have occurred to me of noticing the Armenian character, soon cooled my resentment, and enabled me to reconcile the wariness and apathy of this man, with the common principles which govern his sect.

THE present race of Armenians, like the Jews, are with little exception occupied in commerce, chiefly in its smallest branches, and having long lost with their country the spirit of patriotism, divested also of any valuable attainments of knowledge, they exhibit but a faint discrimination of character; being generally industrious, servile and dishonest; they are scattered over various parts of Turkey, Persia, and India, where except in the English colonies, they live on a precarious sufferance, being often on trivial pretences, insulted, oppressed and plundered. To palliate the evils inherent to their situation, and create a substitute for powers, honors, and national importance, they pursue the different

ferent roads of traffick with unremitting ardor, and invariably measure their pleasures by the mere extent of their wealth. Little susceptible of friendship, they are rarely induced to afford even among themselves mutual assistance, or disposed to promote the enjoyment of society: the Armenians at this day are divided into two general classes; the one the most numerous, established in the Turkish dominions; the other in Persia.

THE city of Jolfa, contiguous to Ispahan, was expressly founded for the accommodation of the Armenians, by Shah Abbas, who aware of the benefits that would accrue to his kingdom, from a commercial and temperate people, gave them an ample protection, and many indulgencies. He permitted them it is said to accompany their adventures to foreign countries, and advanced a capital to those not already opulent, but he always kept their families at Jolfa in pledge of good conduct. The Indian Armenians are of the Jolfa colony, and from an actual residence in that city, or sprung from families originally settled there, are all conversant in the Persian language. The vicinity of the Persian gulf, which has long maintained an important trade with India, naturally allured the Armenians to a region, which at once held out to them the hope of speedy opulence, and the advantages of a temperate government. Nor did they ever think of returning into Persia; but having amassed a sufficient wealth, purchased the release of their families on the payment of large sums.

FROM

FROM the description given of the Armenian character, which I am not conscious of having in the least overcharged, you will not be surprized at the mode in which I was received by my brother Christian at Herat. But I now determined to slide into the Mahometan community, on the first fair occasion; seeing that without adding one benefit, I was like to become a martyr to our faith. In all parts of the city which I frequented, I was known only as a Mahometan, except in the karavansera, where I experienced unceasing insult and derision; for the Persians affect a greater scruple in communicating with those of a different religion, than any other sect of Mahometans. I was not even permitted to draw water out of a common well, but ordered to place my vessel on the ground, which was filled, by a person hired for the purpose, from a height and not touched. When I have been waiting for this supply, the town boys who in their round of diversion, would occasionally take our karavansera in their way, learning that I was an impure person, used to form a circle round me, and desired to have the unclean part shewn to them, and seemed much disappointed, on being told that I was unclean all over. My journey hitherto, if not productive of other advantage, has corrected my former belief of Mahometan politeness and suavity of manners, and also I trust, qualified that insolence of carriage, which I have too frequently evinced to the inhabitants of our eastern territories.

COULD one of our Indian grandees in the fullness of his
power,

power, seated in a palankeen, perhaps on an elephant, surrounded with those bands of stickmen and pikemen, who disperse every man and beast that dares to cross his way: Could this personage be transported on the sudden to Herat, how speedily would he be divested of his plumes, and reduced to his simple value. Whenever I quitted the purlieus of my lodging, I became a grave hypocritical Mussulman, with the enjoyment of all his privileges; and the city containing a various description of people, there was little apprehension of a discovery. I daily frequented the eating-houses, where all the talk of the day is circulated, and chiefly fabricated, in conjunction with the barber's shop, which in Herat, has a neat appearance. In the centre of it stands a small stone pillar, on the top of which is placed a cup of water, in readiness for operation, and the sides of the shop are decorated with looking glasses, razors, and beard combs. Home having no pleasures for me, I was glad to seek them abroad; nor did I fail in procuring equal amusement and information. Neither Afghanistan or the northern provinces of Persia, permit the residence of courtezans, or any women that dance or sing for the public entertainment. The northern Persians affect to express an abhorrence of the Indian Mahometans, whom they reprobate for a general depravity of manners, and a neglect of religious duties, yet this temperate and demure people are much defamed, if under their mysterious carriage of body, they do not practice in their different vocations, every species of deceit and knavery.

knavery. In India, it is a well known fact, that the Moguls, a denomination given there to all foreign Mahometans, throw off their northern cloke, and becoming notorious debauchees, laugh to scorn the precepts of their doctors.

HERAT is a smaller city than Kandahar, but maintains a respectable trade ; and the market-place occupying a long street, covered with an arched roof, is filled with shops of various wares. Bread, rice, and flesh meats, with numerous fruits and vegetables, are equally cheap and abundant ; and the grand market, held once a week, is so crowded with the produce of the neighbouring villages, that a passage through it is difficult and fatiguing. Coarse woollens of a strong texture are manufactured in the adjacent districts, a great part of which made into garments, are exported into various parts of northern Persia ; furtouts of sheepskin with the wool in the inside, are seen hanging at almost every shop, and are used by all classes of people in the winter season. A small quantity of European commodities is brought to this city from the gulf of Persia, consisting of French broad cloths, cutlery, small looking glasses, and prints ; but their low prices shew that the demand is very limited. The police of Herat is judiciously regulated, and the administration of justice vigorous. Two men, apparently above the ordinary class, having been convicted of theft, were suspended by the heels from a dome, which stands in the centre of the market, where they remained near an hour, to the terror of a gazing populace ; having witnessed

nessed a part of this exhibition, I returned to my lodging with the interested belief that my property, which was all in specie, concealed about my person, had derived from it an additional security.

ON exchanging some gold at this place, I found the rate more favourable than at Kandahar or Kabul; yet still one in sixteen less than the Indian value. Though I was unremittingly cautious in concealing my money, knowing that a discovery would bring an host of enemies on my head, one of my travelling acquaintances, suddenly opened the door of my apartment at Herat, a very unusual practice among Asiatics, and found me examining the state of my finances. At the sight of the gold spread on the floor, he was struck with surprize, and expressed an eager curiosity to know the occupation, that had procured me so much wealth. But either my speedy departure from Herat, or a more than ordinary honesty in the Persian, prevented the ill consequence which I had apprehended from the imprompt visit,

KHORASAN,* the most eastern the largest, as well as the most important province of Persia, participated the various and severe revolutions which affected the state of the kingdom, from the dissolution of the Grecian dynasty, until the end of the ninth century, when it was involved in the Tartar dominion of the

* Khor in the ancient Persic, it is said, signifies the last.—Sir William Jones.

Sammani race ; and in the beginning of the sixteenth century, after having experienced a succession of Tartar and Arabian rulers, it was annexed to Persia by Ismael, surnamed Sofi, from whom the appellation of Sofi has been given in Europe to the Persian kings.

HERAT had continued the principal city of Khorasan, until the succession of Ismael, who bestowed the pre-eminence on Muschid, from its containing the tomb of Moozau Reza, his supposed ancestor, and one of the twelve grand Imaums or priests of the Persians. Since Muschid became the capital of Khorasan, it has been enriched by large donations of the Mahometans of the sect of Ali, generally known by the name of Schiahs. Even Nadir Shah, the least disposed of the Persian kings to ecclesiastical endowments, ornamented a mosque, which had been built over the tomb of Moozau Reza, with a massy cabinet of silver and a spacious lamp of the same metal.

THE religion of the koran had existed throughout the vast Mahometan empire, for the space of nine hundred years without any essential change, when it experienced a severe blow from the intrepidity of Ismael and rapid success of his arms. In the course of the first periods of Mahometanism, four Arabian doctors, Malek, Ambel, Hanneifa and Shaffee, made commentaries on the original text, which were adopted by sects, now severally distinguished by the names of commentators. But these explanations do not appear to have militated with much force against
the

the first system, or created any violent feuds among the different sectaries.

As the grand innovation of the Mahometan religion was effected in Persia, and chiefly exists in that region, I am induced to make a brief chronological review of some of its more important epochs, previously to this event. It is seen that the Tartar Arsaces, having expelled the princes who succeeded to the conquest of Alexander, established a dynasty, which flourished for the space of four hundred and fifty years, and which in the two hundred and twenty sixth year of the Christian æra was extinguished, in the person of Artabanus, by Ardeshere,* the Artaxerxes of the Greeks, said to have been descended from the ancient race of Persian kings.

SHOULD it be found, which I am induced to believe, that the Persians and the Parthians are a distinct people, it is not improbable that the nations which ancient history denominates Parthians, were composed of the Tartars of the Arsacian dynasty, which held a long possession of Persia, and maintained such fierce conflicts with the Roman empire. The dexterity of the archers, which constituted the strength of the Parthian cavalry, and an excursive rapid manner of fighting, which was represented as most formidable when they appeared to fly from

* The successors of this prince were denominated Sassanides, from Sassan the father of Ardeshere.

battle, corresponds closely with the military practice of the modern Tartars; in contradistinction to the other nations of northern Asia.

THE Arabians carried their conquests and their religion into Persia, in six hundred and fifty one of our æra, from which time it remained subject to the khaliphat, until the middle of the eleventh century, when it was overrun and subdued by Jogrul Beg, a Turkoman prince of the Seljukian* race. The successors of Jogrul, continued to govern certain quarters of Persia in the year 1187, when the last prince of that race was conquered by Amalek Dinar, who in his turn fell under the power of Jakash, the Turcoman prince of Kharasm. But in 1218 of our æra, the Kharasmian empire, the Arabian khalifat with the grandest portion of the eastern world were swallowed up in the power of Jenjis Khan, whose posterity held possession of Persia, for the space of one hundred and seventy-four years, though ultimately rent into small principalities by a series of intestine wars. It became after that period, an appendage to the dominion of Timur, and appears to have acknowledged in separate governments, a general dependance on certain branches of his family, until the year 1499, when Ismael Sofi, taking up

* So named from Seljuk his grandfire, who occupied a private station in the vicinity of Samarkand, where he held large landed possessions.

arms against the Tartar princes, rose by a quick succession of victory, and assumed the undivided throne of Persia.

It is seen in Knolles's very estimable history of the Turks, that Ismael was the son of Hyder, surnamed from the place of his birth, or the residence of his youth, Ardebil, and that he was honourably descended. Retiring from the occupations of the world, Hyder fixed his abode in the city of Tauris, where he passed an austere contemplative life, and was held by the inhabitants of that quarter in great veneration. The fame of his character, soon procured him the name of a prophet, and caused multitudes of people to resort to him from all parts of Persia and Armenia. The more to seduce the multitude, ever delighted with novelty, he began to inveigh against the doctrine of the Mahometans, which enjoins a sacred remembrance of the three* first successors of their prophet, and to revive the opinions of a certain preceding dervish named Guini, who was known also by the designation of Sofi. He asserted as if inspired from above, that none should enter the kingdom of heaven, but those of the sect of Ali, who was the genuine heir and associate of Mahomet; and ordained, that the memory of Abubucker, Omar, and Osman should be held accursed. The king of Persia, whom Knolles calls Assymbeius Ufan Cassanes,†

to

* Abubucker, Omar, and Osman.

† It is seriously regretted that the Greek and Roman writers, as also many of the
moderns,

to strengthen his government and acquire popularity, invited Hyder to court, and gave him his daughter in marriage, from which sprung Ismael. Being now brought forward on a more conspicuous theatre; Hyder grew into the general estimation of the people, which alarming the fears of Jacob the son of Huf-fan, who had succeeded to the kingdom, he secretly put him to death.

ISMAEL flying from the power of Jacob, took refuge with the chief of a small territory, on the southern borders of the Caspian sea, named Pyrchales.* Some of the friends of Hyder retired at the same time into lesser Armenia, then subject to the Turks, where they promulgated their doctrine with success. Their disciples were distinguished by a red band tied over the turban, whence it is said they first obtained the appellation of Kuffel Bash, which in the Turkish language, as has been already noticed, signifies red head. Ismael during

moderns, have not delivered to us the literal names of men and places, which occur in their history of foreign nations. This want of accuracy, or rather the impulse of an absurd vanity, has involved the European histories of Asia, in a maze of obscurity; those especially which represented the series of warfare maintained against Persia by the states of Greece, and ultimately the conquest of that empire by Alexander of Macedon. The name given by Knolles to the Persian king, taken from some latin records, is evidently a misnomer, as no such denomination is now in use among the Mahometans, and we know that no change has affected their names, since the first establishment of the khaliphat. His regal title, being a Tartar, might have been Azim Beg, signifying a great lord or prince, and his domestic appellation, Hussian Cassim.

* So expressed by Knolles.

his

his retirement advanced, with zeal, the tenets of his father, and being by nature conspicuously eloquent, of a penetrating genius and austere life, of a comely person and invincible courage, was by the vulgar, counted more than human. The nobles of the neighbouring country, allured by the endowments of Ismael, and the specious novelty of his doctrine, resorted to his place of abode, with offers of support; and, though seeming to shun them, he was invested with authority, honors and wealth. In token of his rare qualifications and a belief in his power of prophecy, Ismael received the title of Sofi, "which, faith Knolles" signifyeth among these people, a wise man, or the interpreter of the Gods."*

THE death of Jacob, which must have happened at an early period of his reign, and the tumults that ensued in Persia, then usurped by one Elvan Beg, who was also engaged in a warfare with his brother, named Morad, encouraged Ismael to urge his fortune on so promising a field. Obtaining some military aid from Pyrchales, his first protector, he penetrated into Armenia, where he recovered the patrimony of his family, and was cordially received by those who had favored his father. Pursuing his success he penetrated into Shirvan, he took and sacked Shah Machee, the capital of the province, by the plunder of which

* This word I apprehend is purely of Greek origin; the Mahometans had at this period, been long conversant in Greek letters.

he largely increased the numbers and hopes of his army. Elvan Beg had now expelled Morad, and was busied in punishing some of the principal citizens of Tauris, the capital of the kingdom, for having taken up arms in favor of his brother, when Ismael suddenly approaching the city, took it without opposition. Elvan deprived of other support, formed an alliance with his brother, but in his progress to form a junction with the army of Morad, he was vigorously attacked by Ismael, and slain in battle; the conqueror marched without delay against Morad, who was encamped at Babylon, and compelled him to fly into the Arabian desert:* he rose without a competitor to the throne of Persia.†

ISMAEL is perhaps the first prince, who at once conquered a spacious kingdom and the religious prejudices of its people. Nor does it appear that any of those violent commotions were excited, which usually mark the progress of ecclesiastical reformation. The system of Hyder and Ismael, was founded on the position that Mahomet had given his daughter Fatima to Ali, as a mark of the greatest affection, and bequeathed to him the succession of the khaliphate. But, that in defiance of this sacred testament, Abubucker, one of the associated friends of Mahomet, setting aside the claims of Ali, had assumed the powers of government,

* Where he was cut off by domestic treachery.

† Ismael's accession happened about the year 1508.

which

which at his death, were also forcibly held in a consequent administration by Omar and Osman. But, that the injuries of Ali, having ultimately roused the divine interposition, he became the ruler of the Mussulmans.* This doctrine being unanimously received, Ismael ordained, that as the three first khaliphs were usurpers and sacrilegious violators of the last mandate of their prophet, their memory should, at the five stated times of prayer, be reprobated with every expression of contumely, and the severest vengeance of God denounced against them. He also inserted at the conclusion of the Mahometan creed, that Ali is the friend or the beloved of God, and directed that he and his posterity should be distinguished by appellation of imaums, or holy men.† In contradistinction to the Soonis, who in their prayers cross the hands on the lower part of the breast, the Schiahs drop their arms in straight lines; and as the Soonis at

* In commemoration of the four first successors of Mahomet, who were also his confidential associates, and by their enthusiastic courage, had been his grand instruments in aggrandizing the khaliphat, the general body of Mahometans, except the Persians, are often termed Char Yaree, or those of the four friends. They are likewise called Soonis, an Arabic word, signifying the followers of the right path.

† The real number consists of eleven persons, to which a twelfth, supposed yet to come, has been added; their names are Ali, Hussen and Hussain, his sons, Zyne-ul-Abedein, Mahomet Baukur, Jaffier Sadue, Moufa Kazim, Ali Moufa Besa, Mahomet Tuckee, Ali Nughee, Hussen Anscany and Mahomet Mhedy. The titles bestowed usually on Ali are, Ameer-ul-Momenein, Mortiz Ali and Hyder. This last denomination signifying a lion, is particularly given to Ali, when his military exploits are rehearsed. But when the profoundest respect is expressed for his memory, he is entitled Ameer-ul-Momenein, or lord of the faithful.

certain periods of the prayer, press their forehead on the ground or a carpet, the sectaries of Ali lay on the spot which the head reaches, a small tile of white clay, impressed with characters sacred to the memory of Ali.

SOME classes of the Schiahs believe that Ali was an incarnation of the deity, who perceiving they say, the mission which had been delegated on Mahomet to be incomplete, assumed the person of this khaliph, for the purpose of fixing the Moslem faith and power on a firmer basis. The Schiahs have imbibed strong religious prejudices, are more inflamed with the zeal of devotion, and consequently less tolerant to the other sects than the Soonis. In Persia, they do not permit a Sooni to eat at their board, and in common language, without provocation or heat of temper, they call him an infidel. But in what light, dear Sir, will you view a numerous and a civilized people, who have produced writings that would exalt the name of the most polished nations, yet in solemn deliberate expression, imprecate God's wrath five times a day, on the souls and ashes of three men who never did them an injury, and who in their day, advanced the empire of Mahomet to a high pitch of glory and power. Not appeased with uttering the keenest reproaches against the memory of these khaliphs, they pour a torrent of abuse on every branch of their families, male and female, lower even than the seventh generation. I have seen their imagination tortured with inventing terms of reproach on these men and their posterity, and commit verbally every act of lewdness with their

their wives, daughters, and the progeny down to the present day. The Soonis, though aware of this unvaried ceremony of execrating the memory of men, whom they have been long taught to hold in reverence, and that they themselves are stigmatized as infidels, do not even, when fully empowered, intemperately resent this persecuting spirit of the Persians.

IN the division of Khorasan, subject to the Afghan empire, the Persians enjoy a fair portion of civil and religious liberty, and are rarely treated with insults.

IN noticing the more liberal opinions of the Soonis, in the practice of their religion, I am brought to the recollection of an occurrence, which places this fact in a conspicuous point of view.

AN Armenian merchant from Ispahan, accompanying an adventure of some value, came to the karavansera in Kabul, where I lodged; and though five of his countrymen were on the spot, the other residents being Jews, Mahometans and Hindoos, not one of them advanced to give him welcome or an offer of assistance; and to augment his embarrassment, all the apartments of the serauce were occupied. In this predicament stood the Armenian, and he must have lain in the street, had not a Turk invited this forlorn Christian into his own apartment; and he fed him also at his own board. One of the Armenian tribe, after some days, taking shame, perhaps from the Mahometan example, or expecting some advantage from the cargoe

of his countryman, tendered him a part of his habitation, which the stranger at first refused; nor did he accept the invitation, until seriously admonished of the crime of forming so close a connection with an infidel.

It is now time to revert to my own story, and inform you, that it had been my first intention to have proceeded from Herat to Reshd, the principal town of the Ghilan province, which lies a few miles inland from Inzellee, a Russian factory on the border of the Caspian sea. It is a computed journey of seventy days, of about twenty miles each, from this city to Reshd,* but the road which leads through the lesser Irak,† has a deviating course from the direct line.

BEING informed by the Armenians of Herat, that Russian vessels navigate along the coast of Mazanderan, to which a straight track lay from hence, though not much frequented from being subject to the depredation of the Turcoman Tartars, I was resolved to pursue this route, at once direct and wholly unknown to European travellers.

A KAFILAH being about to proceed to Turshish, a town lying in the direction of Mazanderan, I made an agreement with the director for a conveyance; but with a confidential

* From Herat to the town of Jubbus, a route of fifteen days, thence to Yerd twenty-five, to Cashan ten, and a fifteen days journey to Reshd.

† There are two provinces of Irak, the lesser and greater; the latter, termed Irak Azeem, of which Bagdat is the capital, chiefly depends on Turkish and Arabian emirs.

stipulation,

stipulation, that I was to be received in a Mahometan character; and the better to guard against a discovery of my person, I took the name of an Arab, a people little known in this part of Persia, and the knowledge of whose language is confined only to some of the more learned priests.

SOME days before my departure from Herat, an Afghan Seid came into my apartment, and perceiving in the course of conversation that I was a Christian, he exclaimed with sensible emotions of joy, that he had now obtained a favorable opportunity of revenging the grievous injuries sustained by many of his holy ancestors at the hands of infidels, and that unless I paid a fine of five hundred rupees,* I must repeat the creed of Mahomet and be circumcised. Pretending an ignorance of the purpose of this demand, I carried the seid, with a mischievous intention I confess, to the next quarter, where the Armenian corps, four in number, were then assembled, and requested the principal of them, who spoke the Persian language with fluency, to explain the substance of the seid's demand; and this was precisely the point to which I wanted to reduce the question. When the hungry Afghan perceived, that instead of one Christian he had found five, his exultation had no bounds. He swore by his beard, that we should all incur the fine or circumcision. Oh! what a glorious sight, cried

* Such pecuniary assessment is termed Jayzeah, and is occasionally levied in Mahometan countries, on those who do not profess the faith of Mahomet.

he, will be displayed to our prophet, when these hardened infidels, renouncing their heresy and impurities, shall become a portion of the faithful: what a triumph to our holy religion! The expedient which I had adopted, though not a fair, was for me a fortunate one; as the controversy, which became serious, was now more equal. The seid called loudly on the Mahometans in the name of the prophet, to assist in compelling the enemies of his religion either to embrace it, or by administering to the wants of his descendants, contribute to its support; the Persian residents of the karavansera endeavoured to assuage the Afghan's intemperance; but they quickly withdrew all interposition, on being told that the toleration of their doctrine was a greater indulgence, than the maintenance of their execrable tenets deserved. The seid experiencing however more obstinate resistance from the Christians than he had expected, it was evidently seen, that however ardent might have been his zeal for the advancement of religion, he was not the less mindful of his temporal welfare; and permitting himself, after displaying great powers in this holy war, to be soothed by the suppliant infidels, he withdrew his threats for a trifling sum of money; far disproportioned to the first demand. And here I must observe, that when I saw the resolute and judicious manner in which the principal Armenian conducted his share of the conflict, I felt a compunction for having involved him in so serious an embarrassment.

AT Herat I found, in two karavanseras, about one hundred

Hindoo

Hindoo merchants, chiefly natives of Moultan, who by the maintenance of a brisk commerce, and extending a long chain of credit, have become valuable subjects to the government; but discouraged by the insolent and often oppressive treatment of the Persians, they are rarely induced to bring their women into this country. When the Hindoos cross the Attock, they usually put on the dress of a northern Asiatic; being seldom seen without a long cloth coat and a high cap. Some Jewish traders reside also at Herat, where they are accused of practising all that system of chicanery, to which their tribe is so notoriously addicted in the western world. Being habituated to the manners of upper Asia, and conversant in most of its languages, the Jews and Armenians mix with little personal inconveniency in Mahometan societies.

THE leading customs of the various nations of Asia are similar, or but weakly diversified. When they sit, the legs are crossed or bent under them; they perform topical ablutions before and after meals, at which no knife or spoon is used, unless the diet be wholly liquid; they invariably adopt the like modes of performing natural evacuations. And all the hair of the body is shaved, except that of the beard; yet this last usage is more peculiar to upper Asia, where likewise all degrees of people cover the head; affixing the idea of indecency to its being bare; and they never enter an apartment covered with a carpet, without pulling off their shoes.

ON taking leave of the Armenians, I could not help observing,

ing, perhaps unseasonably, that instead of contributing to my assistance, in a land where our sect already experienced many grievances, they had considerably increased them, by withholding even the inferior offices of humanity; but that I cordially forgave a treatment which was to be ascribed to the excess of caution constitutionally inherent to their tribe. The principal Armenian earnestly urged me to open myself to him, and disclose the mystery which appeared in my character. It was not in reason, he said, to believe that motives of curiosity, as I alleged, could have induced me to incur so much fatigue, danger, and expense, which were only to be compensated by the prospect of gain, or a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. But the Armenians, said he, are now the only visitors of the sacred tomb, and indeed the only pure Christians now existing. He was of opinion, in short, that my story was a counterfeit, and concluded by asserting that I was a jewel-merchant, or a spy. I endeavoured to explain, that among the natives of Europe, it was a common usage to visit foreign countries; where an observance of the manners and arts of various people, improved the understanding, and produced a more extensive knowledge of mankind; and that a frequent intercourse with nations of different customs and religious opinions, taught them to shake off domestic prejudice, and to behold all men with the eye of common affection. To this language, which he had probably never before heard, he listened with an air of vacant wonder; but,

but, as the doctrine did not square with his sentiments of the world, he ultimately treated it with contempt. Wishing me however a better journey, he said, than my plan promised.

On the evening of the 22d of November, I left Herat, and halted that night at Alum Guffour Chushmah,* three quarters of a fursung. Here let me again crave your indulgence for the copious self narration already imposed on you, and for that which I fear is yet to come. But what can I do? northern Persia is at this day, equally void of events as of letters, and has but few monuments of grandeur. You must therefore extend a large portion of patience over these communications, and by permitting me to speak of myself, the favorite amusement of all travellers, you will make me a sufficient recompense for all the little chagrins, which I incurred, and some solitary hours which I passed in the course of my journey.

THE kafilah director, Aga Ali, and his family which consisted of his mother, wife and a servant, having consented that I should be received among them, in the character of an Arab, going on a pilgrimage to Muschid, I joined the party at an appointed place, whither every person resorted, except the females of our family; on whose heads, and indeed all parts of them, many an indecent reproach was thrown. There was no mortal ill, which these women did not deserve to feel; but,

* Chushmah in the Persic, signifies a natural fountain.

when women were concerned in any undertaking, what good could result, exclaimed all the enraged Mahometans. Night approaching, the kafilah moved and left Ali to escort the ladies, in which service I was also retained. On their arrival he began to utter some angry language; but it soon became manifest that we were members of a female government, which was conducted by the mother of Ali. She seemed in her manners, not unlike the Afghan lady, whom I heretofore endeavoured to celebrate, but had less fierceness and decision; the deficiency I presume, arose from the constitutional difference between the tempers of an Afghan and a Persian; for my new dame evinced the same thirst after supreme sway, but exercised it with more mildness. Ali remaining at the town gate to make some toll payments, dispatched the ladies and me under charge of some of his associates, who perceiving our progress to be very slow and the night far advanced, left us with little ceremony. When Ali arrived, he expressed much resentment at the scandalous desertion of his friends, and many thanks for my attention; though I could hear him murmur at the indecency of Mahometan women being entrusted to the charge of an infidel. But Ali's honor might have remained safe, in the most intemperate quarter of the world: and for my part, I was so grievously loaded by a heavy musquet, which he had given me to carry, that had his spouse been a Venus, I would not have looked at her. No apprehension now existed of a scolding nurse, a crying child, or a fanatic

fanatic disputant ; or indeed of any thing which could actually offend ; for my present associate was a bag of rice, from whose good neighbourhood, I anticipated much satisfaction.

ON the evening of the 24th, moved from the Chushmah, and arrived the next morning at Dhey Soorch, four fursungs. Some little cultivation was seen, but the general face of the country bore the same wild inhospitable aspect, as in the eastern quarter of Khorasan. The benefits attached to my new character, were now conspicuously testified. I was from my supposed sect, entitled Hadji, and much courted by all the passengers, especially when the given purpose of my journey was understood. No person in the description of a Christian, should attempt to make a passage through this part of Persia ; should it through a train of favourable events be accomplished, he will be harrassed and defrauded, even on a principle of religion, and ever insulted with impunity. The attempt indeed I think impracticable, and liable to subject the adventurer to imminent danger.

ON the 26th, at the Pool, or bridge of Skebo, three and a half fursungs, in an uncultivated country. This bridge built of brick and mortar, stands over a small river whose name I could not learn, running to the southward or left, and is fordable at most seasons.

ON the 27th, at Corian, a large village, four and a half fursungs. In this neighbourhood, I saw some windmills, for grinding corn ; they are constructed on the same principles as

those of Europe, but instead of canvas wings, broad leaved flags are substituted. The toll gatherer at Corian affects to observe a peculiar vigilance in the execution of his office, which he saw occasion to exercise on me.

PASSENGERS, proceeding to the westward, usually procure a passport at Herat; but being averse to a mode, which might have led to inconvenient explanations, I did not apply for this document. The officer, though glad of the omission, held out the utter impossibility of passing without the signature of government, and argued with much delicacy on the crime of disobedience. But feeling some of my money in his hand, he observed that my case admitted a favorable construction; that I was an Arab, and a pilgrim of the holy tomb of Muschid. He would therefore relax a little, he said, in so good a cause. To put money in thy purse, is as necessary in Khorasan as it was in Venice, with the difference that there, the more decorated the garb, the greater respect was shewn to the person, whereas in Asia, the security and the comforts of life, often depend on a wary concealment of wealth, and all its appendages.

THE complaints of Asiatic travellers against a camel driver, are not less frequent than those of marine passengers in our country, against the master of a ship, and oftentimes with the like want of just cause. Men under restraint and deprived of accustomed amusements, become unreasonable in their desires and

and fretful from the natural disappointment of vain wishes. The cross incidents which their situation necessarily produces, and which a degree of skill might qualify, are often outrageously ascribed to their conductor. This preliminary though militating against myself, I thought but honest to the exhibition of certain charges against Ali the kafilah director. The first shews, that having bargained with this Mahometan, on the payment of a stipulated sum, for a conveyance to Turshish, he at the first halting place laid me under a contribution, on a pretence of the extraordinary weight of my baggage, though he well knew, that the equipment of a mendicant, could not have been more slender. This demand was no sooner adjusted, than he commenced another attack, not on my purse, though that was weak, but on my fame, which was vulnerable all over.

ALI seeing me generally addressed by the title of Hadji, and treated with a marked civility, was much mortified, and began to sap the importance I had obtained. He whispered to some of those with whom I associated, that I was no Hadgi, nor even one of the true faith. They expressed great surprize at this information, but blamed him for the disclosure, nor did they ever communicate the story to the other passengers, or abate in their former attention.

On the 29th, at Charsoorch, seven fursungs, a station in an uninhabited country, and supplied with one well, whose water was barely sufficient for the supply of our party.

ON

ON the 30th, at Tursala, three and a half fursangs, a station in the desert, near a well of brackish water.

ON the 1st of December, at Kauff, seven fursangs, a populous, and in this country a large village, which maintains a moderate traffick with Herat, Muschid, and Turshish. Markets and public shops being only seen in the cities and principal towns of Persia and Afghanistan, travellers are obliged to apply for provisions to the housekeepers, who are often unable to provide the required quantity. Though Kauff is a village of note, bread in no part of it is publickly vended, and having occasion for a three days supply, I advanced the required price to a Persian, who, after keeping me in waiting till midnight absconded. Bread and the cheese of sheeps milk, when procurable, was my common fare; which, with a water beverage, gave me a vigor and strength equal to the daily fatigue I incurred. And when the inclemency of the weather is considered, and how broken his rest must be who is carried on the back of the roughest paced animal that moves, thrust also into a crib not half his size, and stunned by the loud clamours of the drivers, you must grant that no ordinary texture of constitution is required to accompany the kafilahs in northern Persia.

HAVING witnessed the robust activity of the people of this country and Afghanistan, I am induced to think, that the human body may sustain the most laborious services, without the aid of animal food. The Afghan whose sole aliment is bread,
curdled

curdled milk and water, inhabiting a climate which often produces in one day, extreme heat and cold, shall undergo as much fatigue, and exert as much strength, as the porter of London, who copiously feeds on flesh meat and ale; nor, is he subject to the like acute and obstinate disorders. It is a well known fact, that the Arabs of the shore of the Red Sea, who live with little exception on dates and lemons, carry burthens of such an extraordinary weight, that its specific mention to an European ear, would seem romance.

ON the 3d of December, at Ruee, four and a half fursungs, a populous village, where a fall of snow produced a change on the face of the land, to which I had been long a stranger. Halted on the 4th, on account of the inspection of some goods which had been damaged by the weather. Three Persians with myself occupied the lower part of a windmill, which our joint endeavours to defend from the cold, were wholly ineffectual; yet my companions seemed little affected by it. They were horsemen, and having no attendants, were obliged to clean their cattle, and go in search of forage, fuel and provisions; these offices they performed with alacrity, nor did they once shrink from the boisterous drifts of snow and a north wind that, I verily believe, must have swept every mountain-top in Tartary. My body, which a residence of many years in India, had greatly relaxed, and a recent sickness enfeebled, was open to every touch of those rude blasts, and I saw with mortification a north Briton,

ton, screening himself from a climate, which imparted vigor to an Asiatic. My associates had been horsemen in the service of Timur Shah, but disgusted at his ill payments, they had retired, and were returning to their families at Nishabor.

ON the 5th, at Say Day, five and a half fursungs, a small fortified village, whose adjacent lands extending in a valley, seemed to be well cultivated.

ON the 6th, at Ashkara, five fursungs, a small fortified village. A great quantity of snow fell on our arrival at this place, and the weather became so tempestuous, that the kafilah could not proceed. Our party went into the fort to seek shelter, and after earnest intreaties, were conducted into a small dark room, barely capable of defending us against the storm, which had now set in with violence. The inhabitants aware of our distress, furnished an abundant supply of fuel, which became as necessary to our existence as food; but when the cold was a little qualified, we experienced an urgent want of provisions; not an article of which was to be procured at Ashkara. This dilemma dismayed the stoutest of us, and became the more alarming from the apparently fixed state of the weather. Yet, such cordial pleasures are inherent in society, that though pent up in a dark hovel, which afforded but a flimsy shelter against the mounds of snow furiously hurled against it, our good humour with each other, and an ample supply of firing, produced cheerfulness and content.

ONE of our associates who had received a more than ordinary education, and had a taste for poetical literature, amused us with reading Jamis's story of Joseph and Zuleicha,* which for its scenes of wondrous pathetic adventure, and the luxuriant genius of the poet, is happily adapted to soften the rigors of a winter's day. Nor was our companion deficient in accompanying the reading with that energetic emphasis and deep nasal tone, which in the east is thought highly ornamental to the recitation of poetry.

As our pleasures and our sorrows exist largely in the imagination, and as at this period, my ideas did not wander beyond the circle of my residence, I felt comforts in my present situation, equal perhaps to the enjoyments of the most refined societies. How often in the fervor of my heart, have I prayed for the fortitude which is said to have actuated the stoic school, that I might shackle, or at least qualify the passions that are continually precipitating us into dependance and embarrassments, and establish within myself a resource for conducting all the operations of life. But the wish was futile, nor would the gratification of it accord with the oeconomy of human nature.

THE inhabitants of Ashkara were now busily employed in commemorating the death of Hufseyn, the second son of Ali, who was slain at Karibullah, in the vicinity of Bagdat, where a monu-

* The Patriarch of Ægypt. Zuleicha is the name given by the Arabians to the wife of Potiphar.

ment has been erected to his memory, and whither the Schiahs numerously resort, in the first ten days of the Mahometan month Mohurrun,* to offer up their prayers. Hussin, the elder brother, was poisoned by some female machinations; but the celebration of this event, which is noticed at a different period of the year, does not produce that tumultuous lamentation, and often dangerous effects which accompany the memory of Husseyn's fate.

A PILGRIMAGE to the tomb of Husseyn, confers the title of Karribullahee; which classes next after the Hadji, and before a Muschidee, an appellation given to those who visit the shrine of Muschid. The pilgrims of Karibullah make grievous complaints of the insults and oppression of the Turks. Yet it would seem that persecution inflames and invigorates their sense of this religious duty, so that it is merely rated by the extent of difficulty and danger it occurs; for I have known a Schiah travel from the banks of the Ganges, to prostrate himself at Husseyn's tomb, amidst the scoffs and rigor of the Turks. To prevent the Afghans from throwing a ridicule on their observance of the Mohurrun ceremony, which happened during our halt at Ashkara, the Persians shut the gate of the fort, and commemorated the day by beating their breasts, and chanting in a mournful tone, the praises of Husseyn.

* The Mahometan months being Lunar, the fasts observed in Ramfar and Mohurrun are moveable.

IN India, though the proportion of the sect of Ali is small, and Hufseyn only known but by his name, this occasion never fails to excite extravagant tokens of grief and enthusiasm, and it often happened, that the masquerade mourners, impelled by a violent agitation of their minds and bodies, and heated also by intoxication, commit desperate outrages. But the fact is, that all the natives of India, Hindoos, and Mahometans, are wondrously attracted by public exhibitions, and those of the most glaring kind. Though any external commemoration of Hufseyn's death is repugnant to the doctrine of the Soonis, those of India cannot resist so alluring an offer of gratifying their love of shew and noise. Many of the Hindoos also, in compliance with this propensity, and the usage of their Mahometan masters, contribute largely to augment the Mohurrun processions. I have heard Mr. Schwartz, the Christian missionary on the coast of Coromandel, as pious a priest as ever preached the gospel, and as good a man as ever adorned society, complain that many of his Indian proselytes, disgusted at his church's want of glitter and bustle, take an early opportunity of going over to the Popish communion, where they are congenially gratified by the painted scenery, by relics, charms, and the blaze of fire-works. From Schiahs and Soonis, Protestants and Roman Catholics, I am forcibly brought to the business of the day. It is the roguery of a camel-driver, on whom, should you ever travel in Persia, never put your faith. Ali now gravely informed me, that he meant to proceed on the next day towards

Nisabor, but that he would provide a conveyance for me to Turshish on an afs. It was in vain to talk of engagements, the injustice of forfeiting them, or the sum I had advanced; and had not one of my associates pleaded my cause with a spirit that intimidated him, Ali would have laughed at my plea.

ON the 10th, the storm having abated, the kafilah moved before day-break, and arrived in the evening at Hoondeabad, six and a half fursungs, a small village, situate in a well cultivated plain, watered by many rivulets. Ali, with an ill grace, procured for me one side of a camel, the other being poised by a bag of rice, consigned to the market of Turshish; my companions, who had continued to treat me with much kindness, proceeded from this station to Nisabor, which lies about seventy miles to the north-west of Hoondeabad.

THE division of Khorasan, which has been annexed to the Afghan empire, seems to be wholly entrusted to the management of Persians, who though a conquered people, live in the enjoyment of every right, civil or religious, which could have been granted to them under their own princes. We met a party this day, returning from the army which Timur Shah had sent to besiege Muschid. This city, on which depends a small tract of territory, is governed by Shah Rock, a grandson of Nadir Shah, and I believe, the only branch of that prince's family now in existence.

SHAH ROCK is the offspring of Mirza Kuli, the eldest son of Nadir Shah, by a daughter of the Sultan Hufseyn, who was driven
from

on the throne of Persia by Mahmoud the Afghan. After Nadir's death,* the empire fell to the possession of Ali, his nephew, who cut off all the descendants of Nadir, except Shah Rock then a youth, whom he intended to raise nominally to the throne, should the Persians shew any strenuous opposition to his government. But being in a short time after his accession, encountered by his brother, who by liberal donations had collected a strong force, Ali was defeated and taken prisoner in the field. Ibrahim, though at the head of a numerous army, and possessing the southern provinces of the empire, saw the impracticability of attaining the dominion of Persia, whilst Shah Rock, who was much beloved in Khorasan, held the city of Muschid, where a large portion of the treasures of Nadir were deposited.

THAT he might the better succeed in his design of seizing the person of Shah Rock, his only rival, he declared this prince, by a lineal descent from Nadir and the race of Sofi, to be the rightful heir of the kingdom, and by public deputation invited him to Isfahan, that he might there be invested with the diadem of his ancestors. The adherents of Shah Rock, averse from entrusting him to so powerful and suspicious a charge, made an advantageous use of Ibrahim's professions, by installing with the necessary ceremonies, the young prince at Muschid. Ibrahim,

* Nadir Shah was assassinated at the age of sixty years, near Muschid, in the month of June, 1747.

baffled in the design of drawing Shah Rock to Ispahan, caused himself to be proclaimed king, and proceeded to reduce the chiefs of Khorasan. But squandering his treasures by an indiscriminate profusion, and having disgusted his troops by an injudicious choice of officers, he was betrayed by them, and together with Ali, then his prisoner, delivered to the ministers of Shah Rock, who put the brothers to death.

ABOUT this period appeared, it is said, a descendant of the ancient Sofi family, who had escaped the massacre of the times, and improving to his purposes the distraction of the kingdom and the minority of a young prince, he suborned, by a largess, and extensive promises, a party in the court of Muschid, and having procured at a secret hour admittance into the palace of Muschid, he seized the person of Shah Rock and deprived him of sight. The act was soon punished by the death of the perpetrator; but Shah Rock, cut off by this calamity from the hope of empire, was contented to remain at Muschid, in the possession of a very limited revenue.

HE has two sons, Nadir Mirza, and Wulli Neamut, who are waging against each other an inveterate predatory war. Wulli Neamut being driven from the city, has collected a body of cavalry, which in Khorasan are ever ready to rove in quest of plunder, and are at this time levying a general contribution on every village, caravan, and traveller, within his power or reach; not sparing even the pilgrims. After an ineffectual effort to
enter

enter the city, he solicited the assistance of Timur Shah, who sent a small army to join him and besiege Muschid. But their knowledge of artillery is so limited, that the Afghans after the campaign of a year, have only been enabled to streighten the supplies of the besieged.

WHEN the extensive conquests of the Afghans in Persia are considered, the spacious empire which they have so recently founded, and their general reputation for military prowess, I felt a sensible disappointment at seeing their armies, composed of a tumultuous body, without order or common discipline. It is seen, however, that they were good soldiers under Ahmed Shah, who himself, a prince of conspicuous military talent and a discerning patron of merit, was empowered to give his troops that force which they constitutionally possess. Yet even under this famed leader, the Afghans, impetuous, and haughty from the form of their government, were never an obedient soldiery; and the severe encounters which Ahmed Shah experienced from the Sicques, when he ultimately evacuated the Punjab, are attributed to the desertion of his troops, who already enriched by the plunder of India, retired in large bodies to their own country.

THOUGH far short of the opinion I had formed of it, the Afghan army is much superior to that of Persia at the present day, who long deprived of a monarch, and subjected either to a foreign yoke or the precarious authority of petty chieftains, have lost with their patriotism the spirit of enterprize. It appears that the Persians

fians have been ever ill acquainted with the use of fire arms, and that their grand successes were obtained by the formidable onset of their cavalry. Little other proof indeed is required of their want of skill, than a review of Nadir's long siege of Bagdad, which, though a fortification of mean tenability, baffled all his efforts. The matchlock-piece is the common weapon of a Persian foot soldier, except in the province of Auderbeijan, and in some parts of Shirvan and Dhaghistan, where the use of the spring lock musquet has been adopted from the Turks; but the ridicule which has been thrown on this practise by the body of the people, will probably long prevent its general introduction. The severity of the winter season, has now obliged the Afghan army to retire into quarters, and afforded a temporary relief to the inhabitants of Muschid, who began to feel a want of provisions.

THE young chief of this city, in defiance of the representations of his clergy, has coined into current specie such of those ornaments with which the ostentatious zeal of the Schiahs had for two centuries been decorating the tomb of Mooza Beza, as had been preserved from former depredations. Even Nadir, the avowed foe of priesthood, made his offering at the shrine of Muschid. But his descendant fearing that the whole fabric would fall into the unhallowed hands of his enemies, has wisely sacrificed a part, to prevent a total destruction. Yet his efforts will probably be fruitless; for if the Afghans return to the siege, they will derive a considerable aid from the low state of the Muschid treasury, which I

am

am informed is nearly consumed. While the priests inveigh with sufficient acrimony against the sacrilegious seizure of Nadir Mirza, there is no limit to their invectives against his brother, on whom they deprecate the severest divine vengeance, for calling in the inveterate foes of their religion, to the destruction of the only sacred city left in the possession of the sect of Ali.

ON the 11th, at Fidgeroot, a small fort, three and a half fursungs, situate in a cultivated and generally a plain country, in whose vicinity are seen many fortified villages.

ON the 12th, at Dochabad, four and a half fursungs, a populous open village, protected by an adjoining fort, and distinguished by a manufacture of raw silk. The districts of Dochabad form the western boundary of the dominion of Timur Shah, which in a direction from Kashmire to this place,* occupy by a gross computation, a space of ——— British miles. Were this spacious extent of territory, governed by as vigorous and enterprising a prince, as it is peopled by a brave and hardy race of men, the entire conquest of Persia would not be of difficult attainment. But Timur Shah inherits no portion of his father's genius, and his power is seldom seen or felt, except some object of wealth, and of safe accomplishment be held out to his avarice. The existence of the emperor is

* It is to be noted, that some petty chiefships lying between Kashmire and the Indus, are held by independant Afghans.

then felt, and for the day, dreaded. Here I am checked by a fear that these opinions may be thought presumptuous and dogmatical, and that from slender opportunities of acquiring information, I have decided with an unwarrantable preremptoriness on the character of a prince, in whose country I have been but a mere sojourner. I have only to urge, that the language which I have held, is prevalent in the country, and its truth strongly marked in all the operations of government, which come before the public eye.

ON the 13th, at Koot, six fursungs, a village dependent on the chief of Turshish. From the vicinity of Dochabad, a waste extends to this place, on which is neither an inhabitant, or the least token of vegetation; and it should seem that nature had interposed this barren sand to preclude the assaults of war, and even discourage a disposition to social intercourse. To the north, extends a lofty chain of mountains covered with snow,* and the other quarters shew a tract of sand, thinly marked with craggy hills.

THE proprietor of the camel on which I rode, had carried me to Koot, his place of residence, fearing to carry his wares, principally composed of rice, to the town of Turshish, lest the chief should take it at an arbitrary price. He told me, that

* A road leads over these mountains to Muschid, which is said to be one hundred miles north-west from Turshish, and about thirty miles to the northward of Nishabor.

his cattle were not destined for that place, whither I might pursue my way in the best manner I liked, except on his camel. The fort of Turshish being at no greater distance than two miles, I would have proceeded without hesitation, could I have carried my baggage, which though of little value, was too heavy a load for me. After much intreaty, it was transported at my charge, on the back of an afs,* to the karavanfera at Turshish; there I found every apartment occupied, but the application of a small piece of money to the gatekeeper, who regulates the distribution of quarters, introduced me to a lodging, occupied by only one person. The stranger accosted me with evident tokens of joy, observing, that the solitary life he had passed at Turshish, was very tiresome to him, and that he expected a cordial relief from my company. This reception was happily adapted to my purpose, and promised my Mahometan character a fair introduction. It was agreed that a joint board should be kept, that my associate, yet weak from a late sickness, should prepare the victuals, and that I should furnish the water, and a laborious duty it was, there being no good water at a nearer distance than a mile.

HERE I must inform you, that this was by no means a degrading duty, and is performed by travellers of a rank much

* The Persian asses are of a strong make, and much used by dealers in small and ordinary wares. I have seen the conveyance of large parties, consisting of those animals, which appear to be more active and endure more fatigue than those of England.

superior to that I held, and also that few travellers in this country of whatever condition exhibit any appearance of wealth, fearing the oppressions of government, and the licentious exactions of the toll gatherers. Even men of opulence do not carry a servant.

PREVIOUSLY to the commencement of a journey, societies are formed at the place of rendezvous, where the different offices are allotted to each; the most robust generally provide the water; some are employed in the kitchen, while others go in quest of provisions and provender for the cattle. Should no prior opportunity have offered to fix such a scheme, it is adjusted on the first halting day, and preserved on a cordial footing throughout the journey. It is not to be inferred that certain attentions are not also shewn to the men of rank, who attach themselves to these parties. When known, and they are soon distinguished, they become by common consent exempt from the more laborious occupations, and all aged persons are invariably treated with a respectful indulgence. My present companion, whose name I never knew or asked, was overcast with a fixed melancholy reserve; nor, could I extract from him other information, than that he had last come from Asterabad. But he studiously avoided giving me any intelligence of the affairs of that province, especially of the Russian trade there which I much desired to know, and of which he must have been informed; and though he seemed to like my company or perhaps my assistance, he soon became to me an unplea-

unpleasant colleague. In a few days, his departure to Herat left me sole tenant of a dark solitary lodging, with the advantage, and with the privilege of being unreservedly admitted into the society of the karavanera, as a pure Mahometan.

IN the course of vacancies, I got possession of a more commodious apartment, in the corner of which I found at first entrance, a decent looking old man smoking his pipe. On enquiry it appeared, that he was then wholly at large; but that his usual subsistence arose from vending certain spells, which were powerfully efficacious in conferring every species of worldly happiness, and consequently in the preclusion of all evil. Yet he was willing to shut up his book, he said, should any other prospect of maintainance he held out. This being the person I was in search of, I made him a cordial tender of my assistance, and invited him to a participation of my fare. The offer came to him, poor man, at a convenient season. It was now the depth of winter, and he honestly confessed to me, that his charms had so bad a run at Turshish, that even a scanty meal was earned with difficulty.

THE mollah, which was the title he had derived from his professional skill, with a natural good temper, had acquired an accommodating disposition; he was all things to all men; and he found a full exercise of those qualities during our association. The little regularity I observed in our domestic system, especially in the hours of eating, was subject of frequent complaint

plaint to the mollah, who applied to the business of the kitchen, in which he had attained an eminent proficiency, with an active attention; nor was Sancho more attached to its produce; and he also reprehended my disregard to those dishes which he most favored. His censure generally conveyed an ejaculation of surprise, at the neglect of a concern the most important to man, or at my bad taste, which he alledged, must have been vitiated in the course of my journeying through barbarous countries.

HAVING enjoyed during my acquaintance with this mollah so many conveniencies, and so pleasing a quiet of mind, I often review the scene with sensible emotions of pleasure. For my strength, as well as my spirits, had been much exhausted by the fatigues of the road, and various molestations necessarily incident to a traveller of my description. The cold being intense and the country covered with snow, it became expedient in the first instance, to lay in a stock of fuel, which is a dear commodity at Turshish, that we might at least communicate an external heat to our bodies; for our creed precluded any interior cordial, nor durst we even mention its name. But we were moderately recreated by a wholesome diet, large fires, a clean hearth, with plenty of Persian tobacco, which is of a most excellent kind.* When I have contemplated the progress of

* That produced at Tubbus, a town about one hundred miles to the south-west of Turshish, is esteemed the best in Persia.

my associate in his culinary occupation, in mixing with care and earnestness the ingredients of a hodge-podge, stirring it vigorously with a large wooden spoon, blowing and arranging the fire, till his eyes were red, I have been prompted to compare him to a Prussian serjeant, immersed in the fury and enthusiasm of drilling a squad of recruits, and cudgelling into their bodies all the ability of their brains. Nor could one of our minute virtuosos have been more inflated with pride at the discovery of a new species of snail, than the mollah, in demonstrating the qualities of some favorite dish.

THE excellent services of my companion now left me at liberty to walk about the town, collect information, and frequent the public baths. In the evening we were always at home, when the Mollah at the conclusion of our meal, either read a story of Yussuff and Zuleicha which he did but lamely, or opening his book of spells, he would expound the virtues of his nostrums, which embraced so wide a compass, that few diseases of the mind or body could resist their force. They extended from recalling to the paths of virtue, the steps of a frail wife, and silencing the tongue of a scolding one, to curing chilbains, and destroying worms. His practice he told me, had been more extensive than profitable, being chiefly employed by the lower classes of people; the rich rarely sought his aid. He was meditating, he said, which I had now obviated, a journey to Muschid, where he would have been enabled to pass the winter, a
season

season always of anxious care to him; as for the summer, he never bestowed a thought on it.

THE duty of religion sat rather loosely on the mollah, for out of the five daily prayers,* he usually struck off four, and on many days the omission was total. But observing that I was yet more relaxed, he would gravely censure my negligence; not that I was degraded in his opinion, but it was necessary, he said, to maintain a decorum of manners, that the people of the karavanfera might not make unfavourable remarks. The spirit and tendency of the mollah's observation, when impartially considered, discloses the grand tenure by which the religion of Mahomet is at this day held. It is on the daily recital of five prayers,† washing as often, and a restriction from a certain food, that the Mahometan builds his hope of Paradise. And the reputation of such a person, in Persia, is equal to that of our men of virtue, honor, and humanity. Even to that of our man of fashion.

* The first, a short one, is said before the break of day, the second on the earliest appearance of light, a period usually denominated the Wokt Nemaz, or time of prayer, the third about two hours before sun-set, the fourth at the close of the evening, this is also termed the Wokt Nemaz, and the fifth in the course of the night. The second and fourth prayers are most regularly observed.

† I have seen grave long bearded Mahometans, retire a few steps from the exhibition of a lascivious dance, and in the same apartment kneel to their prayers, which hastily muttering, they returned to the amusement.

ON

ON the other side, he that shall neglect these ceremonies, though he may execute to an ample extent, the duties of a good citizen, is branded with the general mark of contumely; and should his condition of life not be sufficiently eminent to command respect, he is cut off from many of the benefits of society. That I may point out to you more specifically the opinion of a Mahometan on the essential efficacy of forms, I am induced to relate an observation of the mollah. In speaking of an Afghan, who had himself access to the karavanfera by an agreeable and friendly disposition, he said, that he willingly subscribed to the compass of his moral merits, but was sorry to see them vitiated by offering up his prayers with folded hands. Does it not astonish you, that the mind of a creature so exquisitely formed by the great lord of nature, should have become so strongly fettered by the shackles of prejudice, should have formed ideas so derogatory of his infinite benevolence, as to be fearful of approaching his altar but in certain positions and flexions of the body.

TRAVELLING once with some Persians on a sultry day, and over an ill watered country, the party unexpectedly approached a small stream, where hastily dismounting, I drank a cup of water with avidity, one of the Persians who stood near me, cried out in an earnest tone, while I was finishing the draught, to reserve a little in the bottom of the vessel, and throw it on the ground with an

execration on the memory of Yezid.* On seeing that not a drop remained, he viewed me with evident marks of detestation, and pronounced me a *kaufir*. But Persia has long lost her men of genius and philanthropy. The day of Ferdoufi, Sadi, and Hafiz, is set in barbarous darkness; and little else is now written or listened to, except the legends of priests, or the chimerical exploits of the twelve Imaums, which nearly quadrate in style and matter with our renowned nursery histories of Tom Thumb, or Jack the Giant-killer; though with a more pernicious effect; for the Persian writings strongly tend to eternise amongst them a rancorous hatred to all those of a different creed.

It is recorded that the coteremporaries of Hafiz, were so much offended at his bold disquisitions on the religion of the Koran, and witty strictures on the loose conduct of the clergy, that at his death, they hesitated to perform the usual obsequies. Yet the later Persians have not only acquitted Hafiz of any charge of irreligion, though almost every page of the poet refutes the position, but they assert, that under the cloak of his sportive pleasurable exhortations, he describes the excellency of their faith, and the future happiness of pious Mahometans.

WHILE the mollah and I were enjoying the comforts of a commodious apartment, and savoury messes, made in rotation

* The chief who slew Huseyn the son of Ali.

of beef, mutton, and camels flesh, on a sudden, every room of the karavanſera was tumultuoſly filled by a large body of pilgrims * from the ſhrine of Muſchid. What an exuberance of zeal muſt have animated theſe devotees ! which neither ſo diſtant and perilous a journey could deter, or the inclement ſeaſon of the year cool. The preſent winter was accounted more rigorous than had been for ſome years remembered, particularly in the quarter of Muſchid and Niſhabor, where two of theſe pilgrims had periſhed in the ſnow, and others had loſt their limbs by the ſeverity of the froſt.

IN that band, which ruſhed into our apartment, was a perſon who ſeemed to take the avowed lead ; he was better equipped than his associates, and wore on his head the inſignia of a hadji ;† a pilgrim, who ſupplied the place of a ſervant, began to reconnoitre the room, and as ſoon as he had noticed its ſituation, he diſlodged without ceremony, and with much facility from one of its corners, the very portable chattels of our poor mollah ; and in the voice of authority, declared the place aſſigned to the uſe of the hadji, whom he repreſented to be of ſuperior rank and importance.

THE hadji took his ſeat with a ſolemn air, and looking haughtily around, he threw his eye on me, and immediately aſked, or rather demanded my name and buſineſs. The queſtion was con-

* They were chiefly inhabitants of Tabriz, the ancient Taurus, I believe, a town in the province of Anderbeijan.

† In Perſia it is a ſtrip of cloth commonly green, rolled on the edge of the cap.

veyed in a manner which fully evinced the power of the interrogator; indeed I quickly saw, from the party's deference to him, the necessity of observing a respectful conduct to this superb Mahometan. I told him that I was an Arab, travelling to Muschid; but judge of my confusion, when the hadji began to speak in my supposed language. Endeavouring to suppress my embarrassment at so complete a conviction of falsity, I observed, that I had assumed the name of an Arab, for the purpose of travelling with more safety; but that I was a native of Kashmire, proceeding on a mercantile concern to Mazanderan. Such stories, which in the east may be described by the smoother term, simulation, are in common use among Asiatic travellers; and unless other testimony corroborates their relations, little credit is given, nor is much expected. It is sufficient that their true story remains concealed.

THIS emendation of my account, produced no apparent surprise, nor any further interrogation; and from the mode of the hadji's behaviour, it was evident that I had not suffered in his opinion. The last year of my life had been occupied in an invaried scene of disguise, with a language wholly fabricated to preserve it; so that, God forgive me, I never wanted a ready tale for current use. I have now only to hope, that when it may be no longer expedient to support the part hitherto so successfully maintained, I shall be enabled to throw off the cloak with all its garniture for ever. The hadji was a resident of Balfrosh, the principal town

town of Mazanderan, where he maintained a considerable traffic; he had joined the Tabrez pilgrims at Muschid, and was now on the way back to his own province. The occasion of accompanying this party was not to be foregone; as few roads are of more dangerous passage, than that from Turshish to the Caspian sea, and consequently not much frequented. The hadji, to whom I applied for a passage to Balfrosh, affected to lay various obstacles in my way, and seeing my anxiety to proceed, he made his bargain conformably, that is, he stipulated for a double amount of the usual hire.

THE territory of Turshish, which takes in about _____ miles from east to west, and nearly half that space in latitudinal direction, is held by Abedullah, an independant Persian chief; he seems to be forty years of age, has a respectable appearance, and assumes that air of gravity which strongly pervades the manners of the higher classes of Mahometans. His administration is well liked by the people, who seem to act and speak very much at their ease. Passengers are never interrogated, nor is a passport required.

ADJOINING to old Turshish, called also Sultanabad, which is of small compass, and surrounded with a wall, Abedulla has built a new town, in an angle of which stands the karavansera, the only one I have seen in Persia, which is not interiorly supplied with water. The chief and his officers reside in the new quarter, where is also held the market, which the inhabitants say, has not been
so.

so well supplied, since the Afghan troops have laid waste the districts of Muschid, and thereby impeded the traffic of this quarter of Khorasan.

THE trade of Turshish, arises chiefly from the import of indigo and other dyes from the westward, woollen cloths, and rice, which is scantily produced in this vicinity, from Herat. And the chief article of export seems to be iron, wrought in thick plates. The small quantity of European cloths required at Turshish, is brought from Mazanderan, by the way of Shahroot, or from Ghilan, by the way of the great road of Yezd. About one hundred Hindoo families from Moultan and Jessilmere, are established in this town, which is the extreme limit of their emigration on this side of Persia; they occupy a quarter in which no Mahometan is permitted to reside, and where they conducted business without molestation or insult: and I was not a little surprized to see those of the Bramin sect, distinguished by the appellation of Peerzadah, a title which the Mahometans usually bestow on the descendants of their prophet. Small companies of Hindoos are also settled at Muschid, Yezd, Kachan, Casbin, and some parts of the Caspian shore; and more extensive societies in the different towns of the Persian Gulf, where they maintain a navigable commerce with the western coast of India.

THE departure of our kafilah now drawing near, the hadji purchased a horse for my conveyance, with the money which I had advanced; but not thinking my weight and baggage a sufficient burthen

burthen for the animal, by no means a robust one, he added two heavy parcels of dying stuffs, on which I was to be seated. This was the most rapacious Mahometan I had yet known; not satisfied with the first extortion, he urged me without intermission, for a loan of money, even the most trifling sum; in other words, he wanted to cheat me. There are, I believe, few such men amongst us as Hadji Mahomet. He had the reputation of being an opulent merchant, and he was connected with persons of the first rank in his country; his deportment was grave and dignified; his manners in common intercourse were so forcibly insinuating, that he never failed to please, even those who knew and had experienced his ill qualities; he had, on the ostensible score of devotion, made pilgrimages in Arabia, Turkey, and Persia; he prayed with undeviating regularity five times in the day, besides a long roll of supererogatory orisons. Yet this man of property and rank, of polite manners, and professed sanctity, having in vain aimed at a larger sum, importuned me in abject language to lend or give him half a crown. But my feelings having become callous, from a long association, I suppose, with those who had none, I was enabled to withstand, with intrepid coolness, the intreaties of the hadji, who seemed to take the refusal nothing amiss; indeed I imagine, he accounted me a person of discretion, and conversant in the business of the world.

THAT I might the better guard against a suspicion of the character I represented, especially in the mind of the hadji, who to
his

his other acquirements united insatiable inquisitiveness, I told him that I was a Sooni, imagining that the low estimation in which this sect is held in Persia, would prevent further notice. The hadji did not approve of this character, which was rarely seen, and much abhorred in this part of the country; nor would it be safe for a Sooni, he said, to travel in the society of Schiah pilgrims, who elevated by their late purification at Muschid, would assume a merit from insulting and ill treating me.

By the council of Hadji Mahomed I became a Schiah, and was received among the pilgrims without a scruple. It was, believe me, with no little concern, that I parted from the mollah, who had been to me as useful as well as a pleasant companion; and in the unreserved intercourse which had for some days subsisted between us, I experienced a pleasure, the more sensible, as my situation before had been solitary and irksome. In his dealings, I found him punctually honest, for conceiving an attachment to this harmless conjuror, I used to make enquiries at the places where he made his purchases for me, but never discovered a false charge.

On the morning of the 28th of December, left Turkish, and about noon arrived at the village of Killeelabad, two and a half fursongs. Our party consisting of about six or seven persons, the Tubrez having not yet joined, halted at a small karavansera, where being plentifully supplied with fuel by one of the villagers, to whom

whom our hadji was known, we passed a cold snowy night very comfortably.

ON the 29th, at Hadjiabad, a small fort, three fursungs. When the chief of this place was informed that Hadji Mahomed was our leader, for though of a distant province, he was well known in Khorasan, we were invited to the fort, and hospitably entertained.

THIS day my horse gave many tokens of inability to support the heavy burthen that had been laid upon him. He eat little, sweated much, and often stumbled. In one of his inclinations, I was thrown from my elevated seat with a violent shock, and received a violent contusion on the hand. Instead of expressing any concern at the disaster, the hadji sharply reprehended my want of skill, and predicted ill success to my undertakings.

AT Hadjiabad the pomegranates are of a delicious flavor, a property indeed of this fruit in most parts of Persia. It has a thin soft skin, and contains a large quantity of juice, than which nothing in hot weather, or after fatigue can be more grateful. There is a species of the pomegranate, in Persia and also in Afghanistan, whose granules are without seed, called the Redana;* it is of a superior kind, and generally scarce.

ON the 30th, at Nowblehuckum, three fursungs, a large and populous village, where our party was joined by the Tabrez pil-

* This word in the Persic, signifies without seed.

grims. From Turshish to this place, the general direction of the road, lay about west; the country is open and well cultivated, but like the eastern division of Khorasan, scantily supplied with wood and running water. At this place, my endeavour to procure a stock of wheat bread, to support me during a three or four days journey over a desert, which lay in the road, was wholly fruitless. The number of applicants for a like provision was so great, and their arguments from the late meritorious service they had performed, was so much more efficacious than mine, that I was obliged to rest satisfied with a few barley cakes.

BEING thrown by a sort of chance, for the two last days, into the company of a Ghilan seid, who had been making the pilgrimage of Muschid, we agreed after a short preliminary, to place in a common stock our provisions and good offices. Man you know of all created beings, is the least fitted, and the least desirous to live alone. It is true, that if not sunk by vice, or fascinated by dissipation, he will occasionally fly from the fatigues of business, the rapid hurry of crowds, and seeking the shade of retirement, solace and exercise his intellectual faculties. But when he has breathed out his day of contemplation, he is often seen returning from the world he fled from, with a fond solicitude. It is not for me to expatiate on the pleasures and uses of society, the subject has for ages fallen under the most extensive and erudite discussion; nor can the pen of a journalist give it additional lustre. I will now only observe, that after a tedious fatiguing journey, it was with a
high

high relish, I sat down to a homely meal with this seid, whose remarks and singular opinions on the subject of religion, never failed to give amusement and information.

On the 31st, at Durroona, seven fursungs, a small village, situate near the western boundary of the territory of Abedullah, the road led in a western direction through a barren country. In crossing a steep rivulet, during this day's journey, my horse precipitated me with the hadji's bags of dye into the middle of it, where we were discovered lying by this now enraged Mahometan. He smote his beard until his anger found utterance, when he poured on me a torrent of abuse, and charging his ill fortune to my scandalous omission of the stated prayers of a Mussulman, he declared that I should indemnify the loss of his paint to the last farthing.

On the 1st January, 1784, having travelled eight fursungs, through a desert, which was interspersed with low hills and a thin scattering wood, we halted on an eminence, where the snow which covered it, supplied our water. My horse became so much enfeebled, that he was unable to carry me with the other part of his load; and I should have been left on the ground, had not some of the passengers who were apprized of the extraordinary sum which I had paid for hire, warmly expostulated with the hadji on the injustice of his conduct; somewhat abashed at the remonstrance, and fearful perhaps of a more general attack on the many weak sides of his character, the hadji procured a horse, from a person who was proceeding two stages on our road,

and who for a small gain, consented to dismount and incur an excessive fatigue.

THE domestic associate of Hadji Mahomed, having seen his patron treat me with neglect, and often with rudeness, thought that he might with impunity indulge a like spirit; but seeing no reason to shew him the respect which I observed to the hadji, I was provoked this evening to give him a smart chastisement, and in the English manner; a species of attack as novel to him as it was efficacious, and which surprized the pilgrims, who bestowed on me a general applause. In this occurrence, you will perceive the essential advantages of my Mahometan character: for in my real one no affront, however insolent, or opprobrious could have warranted any active resentment; the only resource would have been a silent patience; it is indeed often necessary to assuage the offender's wrath, to avert a further outrage. The penalty that would probably be inflicted on a Christian, hardy enough to lift his hand in this part of Persia, against a Mahometan, would be a heavy fine or severe corporal punishment.

THE Armenians who visit most of the quarters of western Asia, are seldom seen on this road, dreading equally the inimical disposition and inveterate prejudices of the inhabitants to all those of a different faith, and the incursions of the Turkoman Tartars.

ON the 2d, at Towrone, five fursungs, a small fortified village, situate in the districts of Ismael Khan, an independant chief, who also claims the desert, extending from Deronne to this place; nor is
it

it probable that the property will ever be disputed. Many travellers, it is said, have perished in this track, from the intense heats and a scarcity of water, which in the course of the first stage, is procured but in one spot, by digging small wells.

WE learned that a party of fifty Turcoman horse, had yesterday passed under the walls of Towrone, in the way to their own country. These fierce free-booters who wage a common war on the Persians, enslave as well as plunder those who fall into their hands. To prevent an escape, the captives are sent into the interior parts of the country, where they are employed in tending the numerous droves of cattle and horses, with which Tartary abounds. They are also occasionally sold to the Kalmucks, the most rude and savage of all the Tartar race.* A slavery with these is spoken of with horror,

* One of the names of a native of Tartary, in the language of his country, is Tatter and Tattaur. Having often indulged a curiosity in searching for the etymology of Asiatic names, which though not tending to the developement of any important facts, may reflect subordinate lights, I have been induced to insert some of them in this place.

The term, Ferung or Feringhee, a name commonly applied at this day among most of the nations of Asia, except the Chinese, seems to be derived from Frank, an appellation by which the Crusade Christians were indiscriminately described by the inhabitants of Asia Minor.

Saracen one of the names formerly given to the people of Arabia, may on a ground fair enough be deduced from Sahara, which in the Arabic, signifies a desert, and may with equal propriety be given to the inhabitant of a barren region, as the term Highlander, among us, to the resident of a mountainous country; and I am the more induced to adopt the probable truth of this derivation, as it was pointed out to me by the most accurate scholar (the present Archbishop of York) of our Country.

The

horror, and accounted worse than death. The Turcomans of this day, are a tribe of no important note; and their military operations are directed chiefly to the attack of karavans and defenceless villages. They are no longer that great and powerful people which produced a Zinjis and a Timur; the conquerors of Asia, whose posterity were seen in this country, seated on the most splendid throne of the world. It is now received as a general position of history, that those immense bodies of soldiers which spread over and ultimately subdued the dominion of Rome, under the name of Goths and Vandals, were the Tartars of Bochara, Kheiva and the shores of the Caspian. The present chief of the Turcoman tribe, resides at Bochara, where he keeps a moderate court, and exercises a very limited power. The Tartars of the more eastern regions, the modern conquerors of China, who may be ranged under the common designation of Kalmucks and Monguls, are divided into various roving herds, and would seem to be no longer a cause of dread to the southern nations of Asia.

PREPARING this morning to proceed, I could neither find the horse I had ridden yesterday, nor its master, who it appeared had proceeded alone an hour before the departure of the party. The

The Mahometan subjects of the Ottoman empire, are known in Europe by the common name of Turks, which immediately accords with one of the grand designations used by the Tartars, who wrested that region from the Arabian khaliphat. And a cause of a similar nature has probably induced many of the Hindoo traders, to apply the same denomination to the Mahometans of India.

road

road being covered with a deep snow, it was with great fatigue and exertions I could overtake the deserter, who frankly said, that he was apprehensive of not being paid by the hadji, but, that if I would answer for the payment of the hire, I might immediately mount his steed. The adjustment being speedily made, I rode on to Towrone; from whence I sent back this same person, on whom money had irresistible force, to bring the hadji's tired horse, which I learned from some of the passengers, was scarcely able to crawl. Fearful of being altogether abandoned by Hadji Mahomet, I found it necessary to speak to him in unreserved language, which was strongly supported by a Persian merchant, whose notice I had acquired, and after much opposition, became successful.

On the 3d, the kafilah halted in a desert, eight fursungs, at a small stream, the only water seen in the course of this day's journey; the Ghilan seid and I had filled our bottle for mutual use, and the bread, cheese, and onions, which supplied our evening meal, giving me a violent thirst, I made frequent applications to our water stock. The seid, seeing that I had taken more than a just portion, required that the residue should be reserved for his ceremonial ablutions.

While the seid retired to pray, I went in search of fuel, and returning first to our quarter, I hastily drank off the remaining water, and again betook myself to wood-cutting, that I might not be discovered near the empty vessel by my associate, who had naturally an irascible temper. When I supposed he
had

had returned from his prayer, I brought in a large load of wood, which I threw on the ground with an air of great fatigue, and of having done a meritorious service. "Aye," says he, "while I like a true believer have been performing my duty to God, and you toiling to procure us firing for this cold night, some hardened kaufir, who I wish may never drink again in this world, has plundered the pittance of water which was set apart for my ablutions." He made strict search among our neighbours for the perpetrator of this robbery, as he termed it but receiving no satisfactory information, he deliberately delivered him or them to the charge of every devil in the infernal catalogue, and went grumbling to sleep.

ON the 4th, at Khanahoody, eight fursungs, a fortified and populous village, the residence of Ismael Khan, who possesses a small independant territory in this quarter. The road from Towrone, led in a western direction, through a desert track, interspersed with low and bare hills.

ABOUT three miles to the eastward of Khanahoody, a chain of mountains, of the medium altitude, extends in a north and south direction, whose western face is considerably higher than that to the eastward. This branch of hills, which seem to have a long scope, has effected a grand change in the course of the running waters. The streams on the western side, have a south-west current, and flow, I imagine, into the Caspian sea, or into the head of the gulf of Persia, while those on the eastern

eastern side, are probably carried to the more southern shores of the Gulf.

FROM the summit of the Khanahoody hills, is seen, to the west and north-west, a wide extended plain, thickly covered with villages and arable lands; nor does a rising ground in this direction interrupt the utmost scope of the eye. Here I must note, that this quarter of Persia has now assumed its most unfavorable appearance; it being the depth of winter, when little vegetation is seen on the ground, and not a leaf on the trees: This day died an old man of our party, who had been long ailing; and what was rather singular, his death happened while he was on horseback.

ON the 5th, at Bearjumund, three fursungs, a populous village in the districts of Ismael Khan. Halted on the 6th, on account of the sickness of our kafilah director. Two of the pilgrims who were carpenters, made a litter for him, which was furnished with poles like a sedan, and carried by two mules, one of which was yoked before and the other behind the seat.

ON the 7th, at Nasirabad, nine fursungs, a small fortress in ruins, situate on an eminence. We passed at about midway through two uninhabited villages near each other, Kow and Kauff, noted places of rendezvous of the Turkoman banditti, and standing on one of the grand roads from Persia into Tartary. On approaching Nasirabad, I observed numerous bones of a large size strewn on the ground, and which I learned were

the remains of some of the elephants of Nadir Shah, who had ordered them to be sent into the southern provinces, where the warmth of climate is better adapted to the health of those animals: but many of them died on the journey.

PERSIA, since its empire has been rent into pieces, has suffered severe devastations, and has been grievously depopulated. The various petty chiefs, who hold themselves but the rulers of a day, are often incited to oppress the inhabitants, and impose heavy taxes on the merchant; yet these exactions might receive some alleviation, did the governors exert any active efforts in defending their districts from the depredations of the Tartars, who, even in parties of a hundred, are scouring the country from Muschid to the Caspian sea; and in the course of this last year, a body of them, less than a thousand, had penetrated to the environs of Isfahan. Such acts of unrestrained violence, marked with every species of barbarity, will point out some of the evils, which have this day overwhelmed Persia, which must remain sunk in this inglorious obscurity, until some future hero shall destroy the present pigmy race, and raising the structure of a new empire, shall collect its strength, and impart to it vigorous action.

ALL the towns, villages, and even the smallest hamlets in the northern division of Persia, though but at the distance of half a mile from each other, are surrounded with walls, which seem to have been erected more as a shelter against domestic robbery and private feuds, than the assault of an enemy. In
considering

considering the perpetual alarms, solicitude and machinations, which must necessarily agitate the inhabitants of this region, we are at a loss, whether to consider them more as objects of reproach for the depravity of their manners, or of pity, at viewing the state of national debasement, to which they have been precipitated by the declension of their empire.

On the 8th, at Shahroot, also called Bustan, four fursungs, a small but populous town. From Nowblehuckum, the road lay about twelf to Towrone, whence it had, I apprehend, a west by north direction to Shahroot.* The horse which I had hired from the hadji to carry me to Mazanderan, having died this day, I was detained on the road to take care of my little chattels, which must have been lost, had not some of my kafilah acquaintances each conveyed a portion, though their horses were much jaded.

PASSING over a fertile well watered plain, which surrounds, to a wide space, the town of Shahroot, I came late in the evening to the karavansera, where I found the Ghilan seid in possession of an apartment, which he had taken for our joint use. The cold was here extremely intense, and had reached the point, which the Persians with a peculiar force of expression, term the Zerb Zim-mistan, the stroke of winter. The snow fell thickly about us,

* The Tabrez pilgrims left Shahroot, about five miles to the right or westward, and proceeded towards their own country by the way of Simna and Casbin.

and the piercing north wind made every creature shrink from its blast; nor were there many cordials at hand to qualify these rigors.

FIRING is scarcer here than in any part of Khorasan, it is of a bad quality for fuel, and much of it is of a green wood. Our lodging had no aperture but the door, which the feid, to screen himself from the cold kept shut; nor could my most earnest intreaty obtain any opening for the discharge of the smoke. The only material differences indeed existing between us, arose from this, and another despotic arrangement of the feid, which used to cause some warm debates.

It was my business, being the more active member, to purchase and bring in fuel, and before day light, to procure water and a light to warm the feid, and enable him to perform the ablution preparatory to prayer, an omission of which he would have dreaded as the precursor of some dire calamity. The feid consented to kindle the fire, an office which I could never perform without suffering acute pain in my eyes from the smoke. Thus were our labours, on principles fair enough, mutually divided; but when we came to enjoy the fruits of it, this descendant of his prophet, wrapped in a large cloak made of sheep skins, would take so unaccommodating a post at, or rather over our small fire, which was in a manner embraced by the extended skirts of his garment, that I received no warmth; and I should not have known that a fire was in the room, but for a profusion of smoke. I never remember

ber to have suffered so much inconveniency from the cold ; nor could all my wardrobe, heaped at once on my body, keep me from shivering. My anger would often break out to an extreme height at the seid's total seizure of the fire-place, and excited very impassioned language ; but which he never failed to allay, by setting forth, that he was old and infirm, that he had foregone all his domestic comforts, which were many, to visit in the depth of winter a distant shrine, and that in consideration of a deed so meritorious, and also of his holy descent, it was my duty to assist and indulge his wants.

My disposition towards him, and a knowledge of most of the facts set forth, made his arguments unanswerable ; and in return for the surrender of the hearth, I was invited to Ghilan, where he promised to give me a wife out of his family, and suitable provision for my maintenance. Such was the ordinary result of our bickerings, and it always tended to make the connection more cordial. In my little disputes on the road, the seid gave me vigorous support, and when any particular enquiry was made about my person, which it sometimes produced, he would immediately assert that I belonged to him. I have been received as his son, by those who only knew us en passant ; nor did our appearance discredit the belief, for we were naturally of a fair complexion, of the same stature, with greyish eyes.

At Shahroot we were frequently visited by a Mazanderan
shoe-

shoemaker,* the most efferverſcent zealot, that ever counted his beads or entered a moſque. Having thrown aſide his tools and committed the ſhop to the management of his wife, he had laid out the greateſt portion of his property on a horſe, and a large koran, and made the grand tour of all the celebrated pilgrimages in Perſia. But he grievouſly lamented that the narrow ſtate of his fortunes, would not permit a viſitation at the holy tomb of his prophet, which only could make his death eaſy, and his aſſurance of Heaven well founded. Exclusive of the ordained prayers, he practiſed many of a ſubſidiary quality, which might be termed the half notes of ſupplication, and theſe were inceſſantly whined out with a deep naſal tone, and ſometimes when his ſpirit was violently agitated, he would diſcharge them with a bellow, as if he meant to batter down the gates of Paradife by ſtorm.

THIS ſhoemaker was a little man, extremely irascible, and though immerſed in devotion, he did not ſhew the ſmalleſt remiſſion in the management of his temporal concerns. In an altercation with the ſeid, about the adjustment of a very ſmall account, not more than three halfpence, a furious conteſt aroſe which terminated wholly in favor of the ſhoemaker, his language which run with an obſtreperous fluency, ſtunned and greatly ter-

* The Perſian ſhoemaker is not as in India of the loweſt ranks of the people, but claſſes among the moſt reputable traders of his country.

rified my companion, who hearing himself in a breath called Christian, Jew, and Infidel, fled from the combat with precipitancy. This said shoemaker, by an ill-timed intrusion, had discovered me taking some money out of my purse; and immediately retiring, declared to all the people of the karavanfara, that the kachmiry, my travelling name at that time, was possessed of a large treasure in gold and diamonds, which he himself had seen.

SUCH a discovery in a country governed even by the most salutary laws, might have endangered my property and person, but in this quarter of the world, where a man's throat is often cut for the fee simple of his cloak, it placed me in eminent peril. But the chain of favorable events, little strengthened by my own merits, which had propitiously conducted me from the banks of the Ganges, through many an inhospitable track, still continued to lead me on safely.

HAVING no important matter to lay before you, I must extend my egotisms, and inform you that Hadji Mahomet, having now arrived in the territory of the Mazanderan chief, by whom he was favored, threw off all reserve; he plainly told me, that instead of looking to him for a future conveyance, I should think myself fortunate in not being charged with the price of his horse, and the damage done to his wares. Seeing him equally empowered as disposed to do me an injury, I cheerfully cancelled my engagements with him, on the proviso of obtaining his protection during the journey to Mazanderan.

SHAH-

SHAHROOT, with its independant districts including Nasirabad, pertains properly, I believe, to the Khorasan division, though it now holds of Afterabad,* which with Mazanderan and Hazaar-Tirreeb is governed by Aga Mahomed Khan, one of the most important chiefs, now remaining in Persia. The town of Shahroot is small and surrounded in some parts with a slight earthen wall. The houses from a want of wood are built of unburnt bricks, and covered with a flat arch of the same materials.

MANY people are seen in this vicinity, whose noses, fingers, and toes, have been destroyed by the frost, which is said to be severer at Shahroot, than any part of Persia. The principal traffick of this district arises from the export of cotton, unwrought and in thread, to Mazanderan; and the returns from thence are made in Russian bar-iron and steel, a little broad-cloth, chiefly of Dutch manufacture, copper and cutlery. Sugar, from its high price, being rarely used by the lower class of Persians, they have adapted to its purposes a syrup called Sheerah, made of the inspissated juice of grapes; but it seemed to be of an irritating and inflammable quality; and most of them mix with their food the expressed juice of the sour pomegranate, which makes a high flavored and salubrious acid.

ON the the 17th of January, I joined a cotton kafilah, and

* Shahroot lyes about one hundred miles to the eastward of the town of Afterabad.

proceeded

proceeded to Dhey* Mollah, a small walled village, four fursungs. The horse which I had hired at Shahroot was strong and well paced, and promised to be a very valuable acquisition, as a great part of the Mazanderan road, lies over a mountainous country, covered with forests and intersected by rapid streams.

AT Dhey Mollah, the seid and I were entertained with cordial hospitality; a benefit wholly ascribed to the inherent and contingent virtues of my companion, who from descent, as well as his late arduous pilgrimage, had a twofold claim on the benevolence of his countrymen. I should be deficient indeed, in ordinary gratitude, did I not feel the kind offices of this seid, who smoothed the many inconveniencies which often crossed my way, and procured for me accommodations not attainable by common travellers. The fruits of this village, some of which were yet fresh, are in great estimation, particularly the pomegranet, which is not inferior to that of Hadjiabad. This quarter of Persia produces a variety of vegetables, as cabbages, carrots, peas, and turnips; the latter of an excellent kind, and composes in the season a principal portion of the food of the inhabitants.

ON the 18th, at Tauck, a small fort, five and a half fursungs. This day an intense frost, which had congealed all the standing water, kept me shivering with cold during the first part of the journey. About eight miles to the south-east of Tauck, stands

* Dhey in the Persic, signifies a village.

on a spacious plain, the town of Dungam, whose lofty minarets are seen at a great distance. This plain has become famous, in the latter annals of Persia, for a victory obtained by Nadir Shah, before the period of his sovereignty, over the Afghan Ashruff, who then held possession of Ispahan. The battle which was severe but decisive, twelve of thirty thousand Afghans being it is said, either killed or taken, advanced Nadir high in the estimation of Shah Thamas, who was present in the action. As a distinguished mark of his favor, and one of the most honourable, which the Persian princes used to confer on a subject, he permitted Nadir to be denominated the royal slave, by the title of Thamas Kuli.*

It would afford me a sensible pleasure, were I enabled to point out to you, any monuments of the former grandeur and magnificence of the Persian empire, which has been seen to run a long course of glory, and to often combat with success the legions of Rome; yet where are now the Roman eagles, that were wont to stun the world with the cry of victory? Where are now the steeled bands of Persia, who insulted the corse of a Roman general and exhibited a captive Cæsar, as a gazing stock to barbarous nations? They have been smote by the destructive hand of time, which points with derision at their puny race, and at the instability of

* This event which is mentioned in Frazer's account of Nadir Shah, happened in the year 1729.

human power. It is in the south of Persia, where the relics of its ancient grandeur are to be sought, but even there, the misshapen ruins of Babylon and Persepolis faintly mark the pristine grandeur and costly taste of its princes.

THE upper provinces, though affording the grand supply of brave and hardy foldiers, were rarely visited by the luxurious monarchs of Persia, who dreading the bleak air and barren aspect of the north, established their residence in milder climates, whither they carried the improvements of knowledge and the refinements of art. Among the institutions best fitted to give permanency to the Persian empire, were it invested with individual sovereignty, policy would urge the removal of its capital to Khorasan, famous for the salubrity of its air, and the military ability of its inhabitants. Its situation is also well adapted for checking the incursions of the Tartar and Afghan nations, and it possesses a city,* held by the Persians, in enthusiastic reverence.

ISPAHAN and Shiraz, seated in the centre of a country enjoying a soft serenity of air, and replete with the various incitements to luxury, must soon enervate their inhabitants and promote the influence of corruption. The Persians say that, Kareem Khan, one of the late chiefs of the southern provinces, was often urged by his officers to carry his arms into Khorasan, a conquest

* Muschid.

which would necessarily have given him the supreme dominion of Persia; but though brave and enterprising, he had too long indulged in the pleasures of Shiraz, and used to palliate his reluctance to the proposed expedition, by observing that after the long and dangerous siege of a small fort, nothing would be found in it, but a few bags of chopped straw for his horse. Yet he must have been aware that Khorasan would have reinforced his army with those soldiers, who empowered Nadir to expel the Turks and Afghans from Persia, and overthrow the empire of India. The northern regions were long the nursery of a hardy and predatory militia, who from their bleak plains and mountains, were wont to pour their force upon the nations of the south, but who in their turn felt the force of fiercer and more barbarous tribes, until continued emigrations wasted the stock, and withheld the power of foreign conquest.

ON the 19th, at Killautau, five and a half fursungs, an open village situate on the declivity of a hill. This day's journey led over a gradual ascent, interspersed with low wood, and scattered spaces of arable land. This being the last station on the road, where bread is to be procured on the east side of the Mazanderan limits, I procured a necessary supply.

ON the 20th, at Killausir, five and a half fursungs, a range of ruined buildings on an eminence, a mile's distance to the northward of the small village of Hirroos. The proprietor of my horse, a carrier, went out of the road from this place to visit his family residence,

dence, and wished much to carry me with him; the deviation from our track being but short, I had consented to the proposal, and was about turning into the path which led to his village, when Hadji Mahomet arrived and prevented me.

As this was among the very few marks of goodness which I experienced from the hadji, to notice it, is but simple justice to his character, of which perhaps, you are already impressed with an ill opinion. Taking me aside, he enjoined me, in a manner which evinced an honest concern, not on any pretence to proceed to the carrier's village; that the story of the shoemaker had circulated a general belief of my great wealth, and that the carriers had been heard in concerting schemes to rob, and even destroy me; that if such was their design, there were few actions, he observed, however atrocious, which these men would not perpetrate, when plunder was the object; and that the situation of the village, which was detached and inhabited only by their families, would equally facilitate the purpose, as preclude a discovery.

THIS representation determined me against leaving the party; but having before consented to accompany the carrier, to whom the cause of the refusal could not be assigned, I imposed the task upon the hadji, who immediately making it his own business, told the carrier, in a stern tone, that as I was under his charge, he would not permit me to be separated from him. Though the carrier continued to urge his purpose by a long and strenuous

strenuous argument, he was overruled by the hadji, who by some degree of compulsion, consigned my horse to the charge of another person. As we rode on, the hadji congratulated my near escape from a combination, which must have been fatal to my person, or deprived me of my property; for that many robberies were committed in these parts, and usually accompanied by murder.

THIS night I lodged in the remains of a bath, which seemed to have pertained to some place of greater note, than the appearance of the adjacent ruins indicated. The Ghilan feid had not joined me in the latter part of the journey, according to a usage observed by us, for adjusting the concerns of our evening meal, but more prudently went to Hirroos, where he was well received. Being now habituated to the feid's company, which had become equally amusing and convenient, for even our little disputes had a risible tendency, I sensibly felt its loss. Though our acquaintance was of such short duration, I already began to esteem this man as a trusty friend; so natural and immediate is the propensity to cleave to what gives us solace and relieves our anxiety; nor is any object more completely vested with this property, than a pleasant companion.

CORDIAL connections and the interchange of good offices, nowhere make a quicker progress than in the course of a journey. Travellers, aware of the approach of a period, which is to cause a general, probably a final separation, occupy to the best advantage, the limited extent of their associations; and as few selfish views
have

have time to spring up, these contingent compacts usually abound in good humour and good faith. In India, they have in common circulation, as a sentence expressive of the pleasures arising from cursory societies and parties, casually formed, "Enjoy this meeting as a gift snatched from fate; for the hour of departure stands on your head." Being now about to enter a province, different in its aspect and production from that of Khorasan, I will here draw the line of division, which may be done with the more propriety at Killasir, as it will also mark the eastern limit of Hazaar Jireeb,* a small district dependant on Mazanderan.

From Shahroot, the road has nearly a western direction, through a country generally open. Low hills are also seen at wide intervals. The soil is a mixture of sand and earth, and well cultivated as far as the vicinity of Killantau, where the vallies become more contracted, and leave but small spaces for agriculture. The sides of the hills are chiefly appropriated to the pastures of sheep, which are numerous and of an excellent kind.

On the 21st, at Challoo, four fursungs, a small open village, on the eastern side of the base of a steep hill, and close on the brink of a rapid stream, which was dashed with a bold and beautiful effect on the rocks that lay thickly scattered in its bed. We had now entered a country overspread with mountains and forests, in which were many oak trees, but their dwarfish appearance

* Hazaar in the Persic, signifies a thousand, and Jireeb, a measurement of Land.

shewed

shewed that they wanted a kinder soil and climate. At Challoo, the seid largely reaped the fruits of his pilgrimage and his sacred descent. He and consequently his associate, for he never failed to divide with me the good things which fell to his lot, were lodged in a mosque, and hospitably treated by the inhabitants, who supplied us in the first instance with great store of fuel, which enabled us to hold out against a heavy storm of snow, and a piercing north wind; and without which, indeed, our spacious and airy apartment must have been untenable.

It was with pleasure I again saw an open village; it exhibited a rustic simplicity and a peaceful confidence, which I think could not have existed within a rampart. The inhabitants also, if their kindness to us has not biassed me too much in their favor, seemed to be more civilized and humane, than the people of Khorasan. The houses here are built with flat roofs, supported with large beams, which the adjacent forests plentifully supply. A continuance of the storm, detained us on the 22d, at Challoo, where we found no abatement of the hospitality of the inhabitants, who furnished every thing that could render our situation commodious.

On the 23d, in the morning, our party moved and penetrated through a mountainous country, intersected with rivulets, and closely covered with large trees, which being stripped of their leaves, I could not ascertain the different species, nor could the carriers, whose only knowledge seems to consist in driving horses. Halted,

at

at the distance of five fursungs from Challoo, under some trees, about one hundred yards from the side of the road, where we kept a large fire burning throughout the night; not for deterring the attack of wild beasts, which are not numerous in these woods, but to qualify the intense coldness of the air.

On the 24th, proceeded five fursungs through the forest. In the evening, while I was riding alone, the party, which had proceeded a short way before me, turned quickly into the wood, and came to their station-ground. It was in vain that I endeavoured to trace any marks of men or horses; for the ground to a great extent was strewn with leaves. My horse, on having for some time lost sight of the party, became restless, and I thought much terrified. It neighed incessantly, and though a willing, active animal, would not move in any direction but with reluctance. My situation grew alarming; it was growing dark, and I found myself bewildered in an immense forest, with scarcely the hope of obtaining relief during that night.

In searching for a spot to fasten the horse, and lay myself down, good fortune threw in my way two men, who were driving a loaded bullock and an ass. Without noticing my embarrassment, which they might have made an ill use of, or even making any enquiries, I learned that a part of the kafilah had proceeded on the road which they were pursuing, and going with them about two miles, I found Hadji Mahomet, with some other passengers, refreshing themselves on a small plain, skirted by a stream of

water. The proprietor of the horse, who had followed, expressed much displeasure at my quitting him, which he ascribed to the council of the hadji, whom he spoke of with a sneer, and laughed at the sort of protection which I had chosen.

ON this night was seen by most of the passengers, a star, with a brightly illuminated tail, which I apprehend, from its form and quick motion, must have been a comet. Hadji Mahomet now became profuse in his offers of service; he promised me every accommodation at Mazanderan, as a supply of cloths, for I was ill apparelled, a proper place of lodging, and to dispatch me with safety to the quarter of my destination. This man, though one of the most acute and knowing of his sect, did not seem to entertain any idea of my being a Christian; yet he suspected the truth of my narrative, or rather, he did not believe a word of it; but imagined that I was a trader in jewels, which were concealed about my person.

DESIROUS of knowing the state of the Russian navigation, on the Caspian sea, I had sought the information with too much earnestness, which created a suspicion at Shahroot, that I was a Russian, escaped from the captivity of the Tartars, and returning to my own country. But this conjecture ceased, when it was known that I had come from the eastern side of Persia.

ON the 24th, proceeded five fursungs, through the forest. The greatest part of this day's journey, lying over steep hills of a moist clayey soil, became of difficult access to our cattle.

The

The carriers of this road, usually employ mares for the conveyance of merchandize, being more tractable than stallions, and requiring less attendance. They are indeed as quiet as any domestic animal, and though feeding at large, during the night, they never strayed from the vicinity of the station.

On returning this evening, from a small excursion into the forest, I found that my Ghilan associate had left his quarter, and gone over to the person who has been before mentioned, as the travelling assistant of Hadji Mahomet. He was also a native of Ghilan, well known to the seid, and being stout and hale, had previously to their departure, agreed to be the seid's assistant during the pilgrimage; it was a concern of moment to this old infirm man, in the various accidents to which a long and harassing journey was liable, to have so capable a companion; and the Ghilanee, to corroborate the sincerity of his offer, had formally pledged himself on the koran. There was every reason to credit the seid's relation of this compact, for he was an inviolable observer of the truth, and I have myself often witnessed the ill treatment which he experienced from his countrymen. But being now near home, where a retaliation might be feared, he had assumed so genuinely the semblance of contrition, that in the space of my short absence, the seid's full forgiveness was obtained, and the promise of future union. On seeing me, the seid seemed embarrassed, but said nothing, and while I was preparing a slender supper, my attention was roused by a loud noise of altercation

from the Ghilan quarter, where I saw a furious debate waging between the members of the new alliance. The old pilgrim soon returned to me, entreating with many confessions of his credulous folly, to occupy his former station.

On the 25th, completed, in a journey of five fursungs, the passage of the forest, and halted on its western edge. This day we frequently crossed the Mazanderan river, which, after winding in various directions, takes a northwest course through the flat quarter of the province, and falls into the Caspian sea at Muschid Sir. This stream is rapid among the hills, but fordable for laden horses. And on reaching the plains, it flows with an easy current. At a toll-house within the skirt of the forest, the merchants paid a small duty, and I was assessed a few pence, on the score of being a stranger.

In my way through this extensive forest, I did not see the vestige of a habitation, nor any culture, except some very narrow strips of land, thinly interspersed at the base of the hills. But the vallies now opened and exhibited a pleasing picture of plenty and rural quiet. The villages all open and neatly built; the verdant hills and dales, encircled by streams of delicious water, presented a scene that gave the mind ineffable delight. The air, though in winter, was mild, and had the temperature of an English climate in the month of April. This change of weather, effected within so short a space of time, arises from the low situation of the province, its near vicinity to the Caspian sea, and the shelter

shelter of the adjacent mountains. The sheep in numerous flocks were feeding on all sides, but they are of a less size than those of Khorasan, and have not the large ponderous tail which is peculiar to this animal, in the countries lying between the Indus and the eastern confines of Mazanderan; neither is their flesh so fat or well tasted.

On the 26th, at Sari, three fursungs, a fortified town and the residence of Aga Mahomed Khan, the chief of Mazanderan, Astarabad, and some districts situate in Khorasan. The country in this day's journey was flat and woody, interspersed with small streams, and bounded to the north-east and south-west by a low range of hills. The kafilah having halted about two miles to the southward of Sari, the seid and I walked into the town, which we found had grievously suffered by the effects of a late fire. We were stopped at the gate-guard, which was under the charge of an Abyssinian slave,* who after making the common enquiries permitted us to pass. The market of Sari is plentifully supplied with provisions, among

* A native of this quarter of Africa, is denominated Hubshi, among the Mahometans, and is held in high estimation in Asia, for a supposed characteristic fidelity to the service in which he is employed. Abyssinians are frequently seen about the persons of princes, where they hold stations of confidence. And at the Porte, as eunuchs, they are entrusted with the whole interior management of the imperial harem; the females of this tribe, though deficient in those external charms, which are so eagerly sought after by the Mahometans, and which indeed diffuse pleasure among all the sons of men, are also greatly prized for many domestic virtues, and especially for their chastity.

which

which is seen the grey mullet, a fish abounding in all the rivers which fall into the southern shore of the Caspian sea.

SARI is rather a small town, but crowded with inhabitants, many of whom are merchants of credit, who resort thither for the purpose of supplying the chief and his officers with articles of foreign produce. A society of Armenians is established in the vicinity of the town, where they exercise a various traffic and manufacture a spirit distilled from grapes, of which Aga Mahomed drinks freely, though this habit does not seem to operate to the prejudice of the people. This chief has the reputation of being attentive to business, and of possessing an extensive capacity, which is indeed obvious to common notice, throughout all parts of his government. The walls of the town are kept in good condition and the ditch though narrow is deep, and sufficiently tenable against any force now existing in this country.

A PALACE has been lately built at Sari, of commodious neat structure, though of limited size, and has a more compact appearance than any building which I have seen in Persia. The front is occupied by a small esplanade, on which are mounted three pieces of cannon, with carriages of good workmanship fixed on three wheels. Aga Mahomed, a Persian, of the Kajar tribe,* is about
fifty

* A word in the provincial language of Mazanderan, signifying a rebel or a deserter, and the name of an extensive tribe, chiefly residing in Mazanderan and Asterabad.
ter,

fifty years of age, and the son of Mumtaz Khan,* who in the distractions which involved Persia, subsequent to the death of Nadir Shah, stood forth among the various competitors for the throne, and was for a short period, declared head of the empire by a large party of the people. But he was ultimately compelled to yield to the superior force of Kareem Khan, by whom he was put to death. The family of Mumtaz Khan, falling also into the hands of the conqueror, he deprived Aga Mahomed, the eldest son of virility. I am not enabled to give you any satisfactory information of the events which promoted the enlargement of this chief, and in quick gradation invested him with the possession of an extensive territory.

IN a country where the evolutions and caprice of fortune are exhibited in infinite multiplicity, and her wheel whirls with a velocity that confounds observation, where the slave of the morning is often seen at noon exalted on the ruins of his master, it becomes a perplexed disguising task, to trace the steps which lead to honors and power; nor does it adequately reward the enquiry of reason. Such transitions may be summarily ascribed to the general depravity of a people, who unrestrained by laws, or even

Like the Rajahpoots of India, the Kajars are usually devoted to the profession of arms, and they compose the largest portion of the soldiery of these provinces. They are mentioned by Mr. Hanway in his relation of his transactions at Aftorabad.

* He was also called Fultah Ali Khan.

the

the habits of justice, give a loose to every impulse, which promises the gratification of ambition, avarice or revenge.

AGA Mahomed has become, since the death of Kareem Khan, the most powerful chief of Persia. He has many brothers, one of whom, Jaffier Kooly, governs Balfrosh, the principal town of Mazanderan; but his conduct is narrowly watched and his authority so limited, that he cannot issue a passport to a Russian trading vessel without the assent of Aga Mahomed. The forces of this chief, on occasions of service, may amount to fifteen thousand cavalry, which were embodied in the course of the last year, when he overrun Ghilan, and plundered Reshd, the residence of Hydeat Khan, the ruler of the province, who, with his family and treasure, sought refuge in the Russian factory of Enzillee* until the Mazanderan troops had evacuated the country.

It appears that Aga Mahomed is preparing another attack, which is thought will speedily be effected, unless he is deterred by the power of the Russians, who having long derived extensive advantages from the commerce of Ghilan, seem disposed to espouse its cause. Aga Mahomed is at this time, the only Persian chief bordering on the Caspian sea, whom the empire of Russia has yet made tributary, or rendered subservient to its policy.

* Situate near the border of the Caspian sea, about six miles to the northward of Reshd.

ABOUT a year ago a small Russian squadron arriving at Ashroff, a capacious bay on the Afterabad shore, the commanding officer directed a large building to be constructed near the shore, for the purpose of accommodating his crew, and probably to lay the basis of some future plan. When the building was nearly finished, Aga Mahomed to whom this procedure had given alarm, invited the commodore, an inexperienced young man, with his officers, to an entertainment given at Afterabad, on the celebration of some Mahometan festival. Many of the Russians with their officer went to the Persian feast, where they were suddenly seized and put into confinement. Aga Mahomed then affected to express much resentment at the conduct of the Russians, in having erected without permission, so large and solid a building in his country. It was in vain that the Russian expatiated on the treachery of the act, and so glaring a violation of hospitality. He was resolutely answered, that unless his men were directed to demolish the building, the party should be detained in prison, and perhaps meet with a worse fate.

THE commodore dreading the effects of this threat, dispatched the necessary orders to the squadron; and when the work was performed, he and his companions were released. The officer was soon after dismissed from the command of the Caspian squadron, and banished from the court. The empress severely censured his breach of military conduct, which on account of youth, and a regard for his family, she observed had not been noticed with the

deserved punishment. Aga Mahomed lately received an address from the Russian government, threatening him, it is said, with a severe vengeance for the insult offered to their flag, unless he made a speedy atonement. But it does not seem that this chief is disposed to shew any respect to the requisition; and if credit is to be given to a general rumour, another descent on Ghilan may be soon expected, the probability of which is corroborated by a prohibition of all intercourse with the inhabitants of that province.

ON the 27th, we left Sari, and proceeding five fursungs, through a country interspersed with plain and forest, halted on the skirt of a wood near the high road. At half the distance of this day's journey, crossed a fordable stream, which runs to the left or north-west, and falls into the Mazanderan river. The carriers were stopped at the passage, and ordered to convey on their horses a quantity of stones, and place them in certain swampy parts of the great road, leading from Sari to Balfrosh; which, it is said, was first constructed by Shah Abbas, and appears to have been cut through a forest.

AT three miles to the southward of our last night's halting place, we passed through the small village of Alhabad, which has a daily market well supplied with bread, cheese, and such provisions as are adapted to the refreshment of travellers, for the use of whom it seems to have been wholly established.

ON the 29th of January, our party arrived at Balfrosh, four and a half fursungs. The road this day was the worst I ever had

had travelled on, and required, in the winter season, continued labour to make it passable. Though deep ditches are extended on each side and drains cut across, to carry off the extraordinary moisture of the soil, we proceeded with much difficulty and hazard. The carriers at certain stations, were required to deliver their respective portions of stones, and the defaulters, among whom I was classed, were detained by the officers of government; here I might have incurred a long delay, had not the Ghilan seid interposed his good offices for me as a pilgrim and his friend. It was then soon seen in what a favourable light we were beheld. Our hands were even kissed in token of reverence. The proprietor of my horse having no religious virtues to plead, and his quantity of stones being found very insufficient, he was not permitted to pass; and while he with many others were endeavouring to qualify the demand, the seid and I agreed to proceed to Balfrosh, that we might be sheltered against the weather, which this day had set in with drifts of small rain and a severe cold.

IN high anticipation of the pleasures in store for us at the capital, we were overtaken by the carrier, who foaming with rage, at this my second desertion, as he termed it, accused me of an attempt to steal his mare. Nor was his passion allayed, until I promised him a large dish of pillaw, to be ready at his arrival in Balfrosh.

AT the distance of two miles on the south side of the town, is seen a small island in the river, where Shah Abbas erected a

palace, whose roof with the bridge of communication, has lately been applied by the governor of Balfrosh to some domestic purposes. After paying double the stipulated hire, and the fine in pillaw, I discharged the carrier who, like all those of his profession within my knowledge, was an arrant knave. But knavery constitutes a grand branch of his profession, and does not heavily affect the purse of the traveller, who if he wishes to journey on with comfort, and have his name puffed, should heartily feed his carrier; and as the common nature of man requires indulgence, occasionally wink at his roguery. Not to govern too much has been a maxim of long standing in the policy of nations, nor is it less necessary to the welfare and quiet of domestic œconomy.

AT Balfrosh I was informed that three Russian vessels were lying in the road of Muschid Sir, and would sail in a few days to Baku.* It now behoved me to act warily, and to wind up with discretion an adventure which had hitherto been successful, and had at this place reached a crisis, which must either produce a happy, or a dangerous issue. To this period I had assumed, with good fortune, the Mahometan character, without which, the journey I think could not have been performed, especially from Turkish to the Caspian sea. I had been admitted, without reserve, into the society of Mahometans, and had lived at

* A port on the western coast of the Caspian sea.

the same board with the most zealous and scrupulous, some of whom, being now on the spot, would, on a discovery of my person, inveterately resent the deceit. It was first expedient to quiet the mind of the seid, who lodging in the same apartment, must necessarily become acquainted with my departure. Telling him that I was going to make a pilgrimage at a tomb,* much resorted to by the Persians, in the vicinity of Muschid Sir, and leaving a few things which would be useful, I bade him adieu with an air of unconcern, yet breathing a silent, fervent wish, that this old man, whom I was never to see again, might experience every good in the dispensation of providence.

Musing on the scenes which of late had been shifted with a rapid diversity, and on the singular, yet interesting connections which I had formed in the course of my journey, I travelled on to Muschid Sir; a scattered village, situate on the eastern bank of the Mazanderan river, about ten miles distant from Balfrosh, and two from the Caspian sea. On seeing the Russian quarter, I sent back a horse which I had hired, and presented myself to a person who was pointed out to me as the master of a Russian vessel; but he did not understand any language that I spoke. To obviate this embarrassment, an interpreter was called in, and being informed that he was a Rus-

* The place of interment of a son of Mouza Kazim, one of the twelve Imaums of the Persians.

fian, I related my story without reserve; that I was an English gentleman, who from motives of curiosity and pleasure, had travelled from Bengal, through the northern parts of India and Persia, and that I now intended to proceed by the way of Russia to England.

THE linguist expressed surprize at the relation, which he seemed to doubt; but a repetition, accompanied with that confidence which only arises from truth, noticing also that I was enabled to reward any good office, gave my relation credit, at least with the Russian. The master agreed to convey me to Baku, whither his vessel was consigned; and observed, that the commanding officer of a frigate lying at that port, would give the necessary directions for my future procedure. The matter being thus happily arranged, I was invited to partake of a mess of fish-broth, served up in a large wooden bowl; of which the master, six or seven sailors, and myself, made a hearty meal; to me it was a regale; both from its being really a savory one, and from the manner of participation, to which I had been long a stranger.

THE Russian habitations at Muschid Sir, are rudely constructed, and far from being clean. The sides are about five feet high, and composed of branches of trees, twisted between stakes, stuck at small distances in the ground; and the roof is of thatched straw. The furniture, equally simple and coarse, consists of some narrow wooden beds, a long board, raised in the centre to eat at, and a few stools, or buckets inverted to sit on. But the practice of
living

living hard, in all its variations, from eating stale barley bread to sleeping on snow, had formed me into a complete veteran, so that the Russian cabin, with its assemblage of rough utensils, was to my sight a garnished hotel. And the knife, wooden spoon, and platter, luxuries of a superior order.

IN the first days of my residence at this place, I sensibly experienced a refreshment of mind and body. I had been accustomed to rise in the morning before day-break, with my hands and feet geneally benumbed with cold, when after packing my baggage, I was obliged to take a part in the business of the camel-driver or the carrier; nor did the end of the day's journey, often bring with it more than the barest accommodation, or afford me much matter of intellectual gratification. But these inconveniencies were all done away, and my meals as my sleep, became salutary and regular. Being thus relieved from labour, anxiety, and the incessant task of supporting a feigned character, I thought myself happy, and as happiness largely arises from comparison and the excursions of fancy, to which I now gave an ample scope, this was perhaps the most pleasurable period of my life.

THE Caspian sea presented a grand scene, and its waves dashing against the shore, produced with a delightful sound, the exulting retrospect of dangers passed; yet I endeavoured to check this rising folly of presumption, ill suited to the nature of man, by considering that the accomplishment of my journey was greatly promoted by a train of events, in which my own exertions had
but

but a trivial share. Common tradition, and certain ideas which are arbitrarily located in the minds of most men, had figured to me a Russian, tall, robust, of a fierce aspect, of barbarous manners, and uncouth deportment. In short, truth obliges me to say that I had ever assimilated the idea of an *ursa major* with a native of Russia, and it would have been equally difficult to have separated these figures in my mind, as meagerness from a Frenchman, or corpulence from a Hollander. But I must crave pardon of the Russian nation at large, for this and other erroneous opinions which I had formed of it.

IN the first instance, I saw that the Russians were evidently of lower stature, than most of the northern people of Europe, and generally had the thick form of a Tartar, with his broad visage. Those who are not in the service of government, encourage the growth of the beard; they wear a long outer vest, which is fastened round the middle with a girdle; their shirt, like that of the Mahometans, hangs over the breeches, which are short, and they usually wear boots. Their hair falls loosely down the neck, and they cover the head, when abroad, with a cap or bonnet, which is taken off in the house, and in the interchange of courtesy. They possess an address and suavity of manners, even in ordinary life, which would not disgrace men of a much higher class, among nations deemed the most polite. The entrance of a Russian into a room at first surprized me; for, instead of noticing any person in it, he uncovers his head, and with an air of humble reverence, offers

offers up a prayer to the picture of the virgin and an infant Jesus, which is exhibited in the most conspicuous part of every apartment. Having performed this ceremony he salutes the company, and at departure he observes the like usage. I am by no means empowered to ascertain the virtual opinions which the Russians entertain of their national religion, or to what extent they may operate in a moral tendency; but I can with confidence say, that their exterior observance of religious duties is accompanied with a reverential attention; and is void of that fantastic mummary which has thrown a ridicule on many parts of the Romish worship.

I HAD not long been a member of the Russian society, when Hadji Mahomed appeared at Muschid Sir. On perceiving him, I was impressed with an involuntary dread, and had my creed admitted the tenet, I should have seen in Hadji Mahomed my evil genius. Retiring to the house I waited with anxiety for the issue of his operations, which I knew would be hostile to my welfare; when, after some little time the master of the vessel coming in, informed me that the hadji had made many enquiries about my situation, and spoke of me in terms of regard. The Russian expressed much surprize at hearing me lament this intelligence, which he said, ought to give me pleasure, as Hadji Mahomed was a person of eminent note at Mazanderan, and might assist me in procuring a passport, without which I now learned no person could leave the province. A storm now began to

threaten me from all quarters ; the person who had been my first interpreter, was not as he said, a native of Russia, but an Armenian ; and with a treachery not uncommon to his tribe, had circulated among the Persians of Muschid Sir, the information he had been entrusted with, embellished with many fabrications of his own ; as that I possessed much wealth in money and jewels, and that I was a spy. This story obtained a general credit with the Mahometans, especially with Hadji Mahomed, who began to contrive plans of deriving an advantage from my troubles. The master of the vessel seeing the popular cry strong against me, became fearful of giving me shelter ; for it is necessary to mention, that the Russian traders, chiefly a low class of people, are exposed in all parts of the government of Aga Mahomed to severe oppressions and insult ; but which an advantageous traffick has induced them to overlook. And Aga Mahomed knowing the cause of their forbearance, preserves no decency in his conduct to them.

THE Russian now acquainted me, with manifest symptoms of fear, that were he to receive me without a passport, his vessel and cargoe would be confiscated. The principal freighter of the bark, Abbas Ali, a native of Baku, had shewn me from my first arrival at Muschid Sir, much kindness, and seemed desirous of relieving my embarrassment. He expressed a sorrow at the serious difficulty in which I was involved, rendered, he said, the more perplexing by the ill designs of the master of the vessel, who

who was a person of a bad character; but be of good comfort, continued he, "for I will be your friend, and do not on any pretence entrust your property to the Russian." This advice came in convenient season, and testified that Abbas Ali knew this man; for on the following day he addressed me in a long harangue, setting forth that the Persians had received intelligence of my possessing a valuable amount in specie and jewels, that my own knowledge of these people would naturally point out the insecure state of both my person and effects, and that an earnest regard to my welfare, had induced him to request that my property might be deposited in his charge, until the departure of the vessel. But the counsel of Abbas Ali, not a little strengthened by the present proposal, determined me to be the keeper of my own cash.

EITHER the resentment of a supposed want of confidence in him, or the disappointment of some sinister purpose, gave the Russian a sensible chagrin; and from that time he continued to treat me with rudeness and neglect. That I might retire from the view of the people at Muschid Sir, who were now in the habit of accumulating unfavourable conjectures of me, I desired to go on board the vessel, and remain there until some method might be adopted to leave the country with permission; and the master having consented, though with much reluctance, to my embarkation, I departed secretly and without any impediment. From the Russian quarter the distance is about a mile and a

half to the mouth of the river, where the force of the sea has raised a long and shallow bar, navigable only by boats and small light vessels; but when the wind blows strong from the north, the passage is wholly impracticable.

THE bark lay a league from the shore in six or seven fathoms water, and was about the burthen of one hundred tons, with two masts; the largest, fixed in the centre, is of one piece and rigged with a standing mainsail, extended at the upper end by a long gaff, and at the foot with a sheet, a topsail; and an occasional topgallantsail; this last is furled before it is hoisted with slight ropes; which are broken when the sail is aloft by a pressure on the lower ropes; the fore part of the vessel is furnished with a slanting foresail, a bowsprit and jib; and on the poop stands a small mast, which carries a mizen-sail. The clumsy form and construction of the barks which navigate the Caspian sea, shew that little improvement has been made on them since the time of Peter the Great, who first introduced the art of ship-building into Russia. Having straight sides with a large and ponderous kitchen on the deck; these vessels sail slowly, and only with a free wind. As they lye much in open roads, the Caspian being scantily supplied with harbours, they are furnished with stout anchors and cables, apparently of a larger size than is necessary; though there is often found full occasion for such aids to withstand the furious gales of wind and high breaking waves, which prevail in this sea.

I now

I now learned that the Russian whom I have hitherto termed the master, was not a mariner, but an agent* who is appointed to manage the commercial business of the vessel and disburse the sailing charges. The crew consisted of a master,† termed boatsman, his mate, six mariners, and a cook; who from their pay and small trading privilege provide their own diet. The Russian seamen among whom I was known by the name of Gregorie, from its near resemblance to George, treated me with a cordial hospitality; nor must you imagine that I was demeaned by an unreserved association with these men, whose habits and mode of life admitted of no discrimination of rank. I sat down at their board without scruple; indeed with thankfulness; and they never omitted to present me with the highest stool, the best spoon, and with wheaten-bread, while they themselves eat that of rye.

SOME tea and sugar,‡ purchased from an Armenian, enabled me to breakfast alone in the cabin, which I occupied with the boatsman, who shewed a ready attention to all my little wants, and became as agreeable a companion, as the want of language would admit. Our common fare on board the vessel,

* Called in the Russian language, Precaufee, a dispenser of orders.

† Many of the nautical phrases and implements in use, among the Russians, have been adopted from the Dutch, from whom Peter the Great learned the art of ship-building.

‡ This sugar the produce of the West Indies, and manufactured in England, was imported at Petersburgh, whence it came into Persia, by the tract of Astracan

consisted

consisted of a large species of fish, in Russia called the Beluka,* which was either prepared in a soup or minced with a large quantity of salt and pepper, and boiled in a cover of paste; this dish I often thought an English sailor would have called in his descriptive language, a shark dumplin. Nor was it inferior in solidity, to any fabrication of the dumplin kind; after the fish came thick pancakes, fried in a deluge of butter. I had laid in a stock of mullet, a more wholesome food than the beluka; but seeing that from a fear of being chargeable to me, my messmates refused to partake of it, I laid aside this with every other distinction, and except the tea, fared as they did.

It now appeared that obstinate difficulties were thrown in the way by the custom-master at Muschid Sir, who filled his office with equal vigilance and rapacity. Seeing me from the unfavorable predicament in which I stood, a profitable game, he directed that I should be immediately sent on shore, there to be detained, until the chief's pleasure should be known. As this man only wanted some of my money, and would have been disappointed by my formal departure from the country, I made him, through the medium of Abbas Ali, the Baku merchant, a substantial offer, but delayed the payment till the time of sailing, that no secondary demand might be preferred.

Two

* It is taken with a hook near the mouths of most of the rivers, which fall into the Caspian; its length is generally from six to eight feet, sometimes it is seen of
eighteen

Two days previously to our departure, Ali Abbas came on board of the vessel, and represented that the custom-master was inexorable to every solicitation, urging that Aga Mahomed was at this juncture averse from permitting any person to leave the province, and that were he accessory to my escape, his head on the discovery, would pay the forfeit. Knowing that an interdiction had been laid on all inland passengers, and that the dispatch of the Russian had been withheld for the space of twenty days, to accomplish some purpose of government, I was aware that a certain risque was incurred by the Persian, whom I proposed to indemnify by a proper compensation; but I also observed that if he persisted in the refusal of all private negociation, I would myself proceed to Sari, and relate my story to the chief, and he well knew that no benefit would accrue to him from the decision of his master. This argument was completely efficient, and when reinforced by some of my Hindostan gold, permission was given me to pursue whatever way I liked, except that of Sari.

BEFORE I leave this quarter of Persia, I will lay before you a brief account of its geography, with cursory observations on its former and present commerce, and its relative policy with Russia. Mazanderan which occupies the centre of the southern shore of the Caspian sea, has Asterabad on the east, Ghilan on the west, and to the northward it is bounded by the

eighteen feet, and has the head and form of a shark. This fish is not eaten by the Mahometans, who hold it unclean, from having no scales.

moun-

mountainous tract of forest which has been already noticed. Though the fort of Sari, from its strength and central situation has become the residence of the chief, Balfrosh is considered the capital of the province.

THIS town occupies an irregular oblong space, of about a mile and a half in circumference, and standing on a low moist ground, its streets are at this season of the year choaked with mud. The houses are coarsely built of brick or clay, with a flat roof, and being generally small have a mean appearance. The karavanferas of which there are four, have little of that neatness and conveniency, which is seen in those of upper Persia, and are of a much less size; but the market-place, which in the manner of Asiatic towns, forms the principal street, denotes an active traffick.

THE rice of Mazanderan is of an excellent quality, and composes the usual food of the people, who find it difficult in their marshy lands, to cultivate a sufficient quantity of wheat for common consumption, and that produced is of a coarse sort. The bread used by the higher classes of inhabitants, is made of the flour of Shirwan, a considerable amount of which is annually imported at Muschid Sir. This deficiency is in some degree, compensated to Mazanderan by the growth of sugar, which though of an inferior kind, is adequate to most of its common uses. When the general demand of this article in Persia is considered and that it is rarely produced on this side of the Indus, it might
be

be naturally supposed that Mazanderan would derive extensive benefits from such a possession; especially through its navigable vicinity to the southern territories of Russia, where a large quantity is consumed, at an advanced price; yet from an ignorance in the methods of preparing and refining it, this valuable product yields but a limited utility.

AN inhabitant of Astracan, I am informed, came into this province for the purpose of establishing a manufactory of sugar, but failing in his project, no future experiment has been made. Were the Russians skilled in the process, they would be enabled, by the importation of raw sugars, to fix in their country an important and lucrative commerce. Mazanderan also produces a small quantity of silk, which is fabricated by a society of Jews; but its principal trade is maintained by a frequent intercourse with the port of Baku, which receives white and coloured calicoes, cotton, and rice, and returns bar iron of Russia, saffron, flour, and remnants of broad cloth procured from Astracan. The commerce of this quarter, which now does not employ more than four or five barks, might be largely extended, did a greater harmony exist between Aga Mahomed and the Russians; especially were the manufacture of sugar increased.

THE Persians have long attempted to navigate the Caspian sea, though with little success; their vessels are open, rudely constructed, and ill managed, seldom leaving the coast but in the season of fair weather; many of them are fitted out at Farabad, an

ordinary town, situate at the mouth of a river, thirty miles to the eastward of Muschid Sir, and now supported by a small trade in rice, salt, fish, and pottery ware. This town in the European topography of Mazanderan, bears the appearance of note, and gives its name to a province; whatever might have been the former importance of Farabad, and it is noticed with respect in Persian history, little testimony of it now exists.

THE province of Astarabad, lying on the the east side of the southern Caspian shore, affords little produce for a foreign trade; and it enjoys a refreshing temperate air, and is beautifully interspersed with hill and dale, and abundantly supplied with streams of salubrious water.

SHAH ABBAS, the most powerful prince of the Suffuee race, pleased with the climate of this province, erected a palace near the shore of the bay of Ashroff,* whither he used often to retire to avoid the heats of Ispahan.† Almost the only marine export of this province consists of dried mullets, which are cured intire by smoke, and are held in such estimation by the Russians, that two cargoes of them are annually imported at Astracan.

GHILAN the richest of the provinces bordering on the Caspian sea, extends in a western parallel from Mazanderan; it is bounded on the west by the territories of Talish and Aftara; and on the

* This is the only harbour, on the southern side of the Caspian sea.

† This prince removed the capital of Persia from Casbin to Ispahan.

south by a range of lofty mountains, which divide it from the dependencies of Cashan and Casbin.

HYDEAT KHAN, the Ghilan chief, has relinquished Reshd, his former residence, and for the security of his wealth and family against the incursions from Mazanderan, has retired to the vicinity of Enzille, where the Russians possess a fortified factory, garrisoned by a company of soldiers, and supplied with a few pieces of cannon.*

HYDEAT KHAN is supposed to possess a revenue of two hundred thousand pounds, a great part of which arises from the produce of silk; and from this revenue, he has amassed, it is said, a considerable treasure. Here you must be cautioned against computing Persian money by your standard, for in this country, where every commodity is procured at a cheap rate, specie may fairly be reckoned at double the value which it bears in England.

HYDEAT KHAN is about sixty years of age, and according to the information of the Ghilan seid, of whom frequent mention has been made, is rapacious, tyrannical, and pusillanimous. Conscious of his inability to resist the force of Aga Mahomed Khan, he has wholly thrown himself on the protection of the

* The most accurate account of Ghilan, is found in the travels of the late Jonas Hanway, a name widely known in the annals of humanity, and deeply graven on the most distinguished monuments of his country. Some useful remarks on Ghilan are also to be collected from a book, entitled, voyages and travels through the Russian empire, Persia, &c. by William Cook, M. D.

court of Peterburgh, from which it may be said, that he derives the existence of his power, and the safety of his person. Nor will the Russians, while they enjoy such important benefits from Ghilan, fail to give him support.

THE silks of Ghilan are exported to Astracan, chiefly through the medium of Armenian merchants, subjects of Russia, who possess the larger share of the Caspian commerce. It was long believed that the silk brought into Europe from Turkey, was all produced in the Ottoman empire : but since a more conversant knowledge of Persia has been obtained, it appears that the Turkish merchants were used to resort to the provinces of Ghilan and Shirwan,* whence they transported large quantities of this commodity to the European factories of the Levant.

THE Persian silk trade continued to flow in this channel, until the year 1739, when the Russia Company of England having procured the sanction of Parliament,† sent their factors into Ghilan to establish a commerce, which should have for its object the purchase of silk, and the vent of English manufactures. They received a cordial encouragement from Reza Kouli, who at that period, governed Persia in the absence of his father, then

* Situate on the west side of the Caspian sea, where there is abundant growth of silk, but of a coarser kind, than that of Ghilan, which is esteemed the finest in Persia.

† They were vigorously opposed in England by the Levant Company, who aware of the injury which they would sustain by the Caspian trade, represented to Parliament that their charter, an exclusive one, would be violently infringed by such permission being granted to the Russia merchants.

engaged in the Indian expedition; and they remained in Ghilan until the year 1748, when the general tumult and devastation, which followed the death of Nadir, compelled them to retire and abandon an extensive amount of property.

It is seen that previously to the dissolution of the factory at Ghilan, the court of Peterburgh began to entertain jealousies of the English establishment in Persia, and from their own growing knowledge of commerce and navigation, became desirous of possessing a trade which naturally pertained to their country. The government of Persia had largely contributed to increase this jealousy, by a distinguished encouragement to all English adventurers, whom it saw independent of Russia, its constitutional enemy, and capable also of enriching the kingdom, by their superior skill and spirit in trade; but above all, Persia was desirous of employing the English in the construction of vessels of war; that it might acquire the dominion of the Caspian sea.

THE first cause of the displeasure and alarm, of the court of Peterburgh, at the proceedings of the English factory in Ghilan, arose from the conduct of the principal agent, John Elton,* who, on a disagreement with his associates, entered into the service of Nadir Shah, by whom he was invested with certain territories bordering on the Caspian sea, and created the commander of a

* See Hanway's Travels, for a relation of some part of the Adventures of this enterprizing person.

squadron,

squadron, with which he himself, with infinite ability and labor, had furnished the Persian government.

On the 14th of March, our vessel, filled up to the hatches, the decks also strewed over with bales and passengers, got under way, but a foul wind soon setting in, we came to an anchor. From the manner in which these vessels are navigated, laden, and altogether managed, I should be surprized if shipwrecks were not frequent in this sea. The cabin was stuffed so full of parcels and baggage, that those to whom it was allotted, were obliged to crawl in, and then they found only a scanty length and breadth, sleeping or awake: the passengers I perceived were all petty traders, who having embarked a certain property on the vessel, accompanied it in person; for there is not a sufficient credit or good faith established in Persia, to enable merchants to consign their effects to factors. The foreign trader therefore is necessitated to become a supercargoe, an occupation which for the first time, I saw in the letter of the word, verified by the adventurers sitting immediately upon their wares, whence they stirred but seldom, and were never long absent: of these people I numbered not less than seventy, who were spread over the deck, or packed in the cabin and boat; It was soon seen that the master and mariners were equally ignorant of their profession; he could scarcely discriminate the points of the compass or throw the lead; and the men, though expert at the use of the tailor's needle, and the implements of cookery, would among the most clumsy of our sailors, have been termed landsmen.

When

When I beheld this ill-constructed bark lumbered with goods and passengers, and its unskilful crew, I could not but entertain apprehensions of our safety, especially in a sea so tempestuous as the Caspian.

On the 17th, we got under sail, and assisted by a favorable wind, we anchored on the 22d, about ten leagues to the northward of the port of Baku; and on the 24th, reached the entrance of the harbour, when the wind which had been blowing strong from the eastward, suddenly changed, and came from the land with extreme violence; but the vicinity of the shore kept the sea down, and probably prevented our destruction. The Russians, trusting to the strength of their anchors and cables, which were of the most substantial kind, went to sleep; nor did they once endeavour to prepare the vessel for the sea, in the event of its parting from the anchors, or use any means of assisting the cable which was severely strained; some of the more animated of them would occasionally open their eyes, and call out on God's mercy to shelter them from the fury of the storm. It abated on the 26th, when we entered the port of Baku, and saluted a Russian frigate, lying there, with all the swivels and musquets on board, without regard of order or count. The agent of our vessel attended the commanding officer, and in his report mentioned the story of his European passenger. It is to be noticed that the Turks and Persians, make a difference between a Russian and a native of Europe, calling the one a Feringhee, and the other a Roofs.

a Roofs. In this distinction is also included a superior estimation of the Europeans to whom they ascribe a more extensive genius and knowledge; and what I thought extraordinary, the like nominal difference is entertained by all the lower class of southern Russians.

ON board of the frigate, whither I was summoned, I related the motives and general track of my journey, and was received with a warmth of hospitality, to which neither my appearance; being clad in a very ordinary dress, or my unsupported representation had a claim. I now became informed of the general peace in Europe; and it was with a deep felt mortification, I learned from a foreigner, the entire separation of the American Colonies and their numerous people. The frigate was to sail the next day to Enzillee, to be stationed in that quarter, for the protection of the province of Ghilan, the chief of which had sometime before dispatched an envoy to the Russian camp, in Crim Tartary,* to represent his dread of Aga Mahomed, and to solicit the aid of the Russians. The agent had returned, and was accompanied by a Russian officer, who had traveled from the camp to Baku in twenty days. Part of the journey lay through the country of the Lesgui Tartars, who are a savage people and proverbially hostile to strangers; But from a dread of the Russian troops, now advanced

* Then commanded by general Potemkin, who was invested with the government of the Crim and the power of controlling the affairs of Astracan,

to their frontier, they had permitted this party to pass unmolested. The officer who spoke the Turkish language fluently, seemed to be an ingenious active man, and well fitted for a service of enterprize.

THE Ghilan envoy, then proceeding on the frigate, expressed a surprize to see me, whom he thought a Mahometan, eating at the same board with the Russian gentlemen; but when he saw a barber commencing an operation on my beard, which I took the opportunity of having shaved, he evinced great amazement and indignation; nor did he, until repeatedly informed of my real character, cease his reprehension of the act; during the process of which, he threw on me many a look of contempt; when the barber began to cut off the mustachios, he several times in a peremptory manner required him to desist, and seeing them gone, now said he, of whatever country or sect you may be, your disgrace is complete, and you look like a woman.

THUS after a growth of fifteen months, fell my beard, which in that period had increased to a great magnitude, both in length and breadth; though it had been somewhat shrivelled by the severity of the late winter; when you advert to the general importance of an Asiatic beard, to the essential services which mine had rendered, and to our long and intimate association, I trust that this brief introduction of it to your notice will not be deemed impertinent. This operation of cutting it, ought however to have been postponed till my arrival at Astracan; for my European face with an Asiatic dress, made me an object of general remark and enquiry

among the Persians; nor did I escape the censure of the Armenians, who are taught to esteem the beard a badge of respect, and even sanctity, recommended to their example by the patriarchs and primitive Christians, and when they conform in European countries to the custom of shaving it, they are ridiculed by all the stauncher brethren of their tribe.

ON the 27th, I went on board the frigate, then getting under way, and saw the seamen execute their work in an active, skilful manner. They hove up the anchor, and set sail with an expertness, which would not have discredited the crew of an English ship of war. The captain procured me a passage from a Greek merchant, who had come to take leave of him, and gave me a passport requiring my admission into the town of Baku, and that no molestation should be offered me by the Persian government; and the second lieutenant of the frigate, who had been my interpreter and had taken a willing part in adjusting my little wants, gave me a letter of introduction to an officer of the Russian navy, whose name was Ivan Andreits.* The Greek carried me to his apartment in a karavansera, which is exclusively appropriated to the use of Christians and Sooni Mahometans.

IVAN ANDREITS, during the last Russian war with the Turks,

* Or Andrew Vits, signifying in the Russian language, John the son of Andrew. This mode of designation is held the most honorable among the ancient titles of Russia, and is exemplified, in the present grand Duke, who is particularly known, by the name of Paul Petrowitz.

commanded a privateer, the property of his family, in the Mediterranean, where having performed some gallant actions, he was promoted by the empress to the rank of captain in the navy; and retiring afterwards to Astracan, he obtained from government the exclusive privilege of exporting, for a certain term, iron and steel into Persia. As we both were a little conversant in the lingua franca, a language commonly spoken on the coasts of the Mediterranean, a familiar acquaintance was soon produced; and the influence which he had acquired at Baku, enabled me now, a part of his family, to pass my time very pleasantly.

THE town of Baku, in the province of Shirwan, is situate on the north side of a bay, and forms nearly an equilateral triangle with one of the sides extending in a parallel with the shore. It is, I imagine, about a mile in circumference, and crowded with inhabitants, most of whom are engaged in commerce.

THE bay is capacious and sheltered by the land, against all winds except the south, whose violence is also much broken by the intervention of two small islands. The southern and largest of those islands, was, according to information of the people, united to the continent, which in that Quarter presents a low termination, but it had been insulated by the influx of the sea, whose waters have evidently encroached on the western shore of the Caspian, in the course of the last forty years.

BAKU, at the period of Mr. Hanway's travels, into Persia, had a double wall on the eastern face; but the exterior one is now

levelled by the rise of the sea, and its foundation brought within water-mark. The province of Shirwan produces a large quantity of silk, of which about four hundred tons are annually imported at Astracan; saffron of a good quality is also produced there, and constitutes a valuable article of trade. A society of Moultan Hindoos, which has long been established in Baku, contributes largely to the circulation of its commerce; and with the Armenians they may be accounted the principal merchants of Shirwan. The Hindoos of this quarter, usually embark at Tatta, a large insular town in the lower tract of the Indus, whence they proceed to Bassorah, and there accompany the karavans which are frequently passing into Persia; some also travel inland to the Caspian sea, by the road of Kandahar and Herat; but the number is small, and they grievously complain of the oppressions and insults of the Mahometans.

ON the 31st of March, I visited the Atashghah, or place of fire; and on making myself known to the Hindoo mendicants, who resided there, I was received among these sons of Brimha, as a brother; an appellation they used, on perceiving that I had acquired some knowledge of their mythology, and had visited their most sacred places of worship. This religious retirement, where the devotees worship their deity in the semblance of fire, is a square of about thirty yards, surrounded with a low wall, and contains many apartments; in each of which is a small volcano
of

of sulphureous fire, issuing from the ground through a furnace or funnel, constructed in the form of an Hindoo altar.

THIS fire is appropriated to the uses of worship, cookery, and fortifying the feeble Hindoos against the rigor of the winter season. On closing the funnel, the flame is immediately extinguished, when a hollow sound is heard, by applying the ear to the aperture, accompanied with a strong and cold current of air, which is inflamed at pleasure by placing near it any illuminated matter. The flame is of a pale clear colour, without a perceptible smoke; and emits a vapor strongly impregnated with sulphur, which considerably impeded my respiration, until by sitting on the ground I brought my head lower than the level of the furnace. The Hindoos had a wan emaciated appearance, and were oppressed by an hectic cough, which continued to affect me during my stay at the Atashghah. The ground within the enclosure, abounds in this subterraneous air, which issues from artificial channels; but in these contracted spaces, it seems only capable of producing flame by the application of a foreign fire. Exclusive of the fires pertaining to the Hindoo apartments, a large one arising from a natural cleft in an open place, incessantly burns, whence it would seem that no extraneous object is required to impart an illumination to the larger evaporations of this air. On the outside of the wall are seen many of these volcanos, which have the appearance of lime-kilns, and one of them is conveniently adapted by the Hindoos to the uses of a funeral pile. The general space
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which contains this volcanic fire, forms a low flat hill flanting towards the sea, the soil of which consists of a sandy earth intermixed with stones. No mountainous land is seen from the Atash-ghah, nor any violent eruptions of flame; nature seems here to have adopted a gentle and inoffensive medium of discharging her discordant atoms, which in other quarters of the globe shake her with convulsions, and pour around a horrid devastation.

IN the description of this natural phænomenon, I have cautiously adhered to the simple fact, without presuming to discuss its cause or properties. These are branches of science, I am little skilled in, and ill-enabled to elucidate. Had the opportunities which have been thrown in my way fallen to a Cavendish, or a Priestley, the strongest and most ornamental pillars of the fabric of natural philosophy; a larger scope of knowledge might have been opened to the world, and talents which have been long beheld with admiration, rendered still more conspicuous.

THE black and white naptha is found in the province of Shirwan, in great plenty; the first floats thinly on the surface of certain springs or ponds, whence it is collected and preserved in jars; it seems to possess many of the properties of camphire, and is successfully employed in allaying external pains and inflamed tumours. The black naptha or bitumen, is produced in the same manner as the the white, but more abundantly and on larger pieces of water, and with a scum three or four inches thick, of the consistence of tar. The houses of Baku most of which have
flat

flat roofs, are covered on the top with this material, which is found a substantial defence against the rain; and when formed into small cakes or balls with a mixture of sand, is commonly used by the lower class of people as a substitute for the fuel of wood, which in this province is thinly produced.

THIS quarter of Shirwan in aspect and the nature of its soil, resembles the province of Khorasan; there is the same want of wood and large streams, and in the winter the air is equally bleak and piercing; with the difference that in Shirwan it is subject to fogs, which, I apprehend, are caused by the vicinity of the Caspian sea. The soil yields abundant crops of good wheat and barley, the bread of which constitutes the food of the common people; the higher ranks only are enabled to procure rice, which is chiefly imported from Mazanderan and Ghilan. The mutton is fat and well tasted, being of the large tailed sheep, and is sold at the rate of one penny and three halfpence per pound. Apples, pears, grapes, and chestnuts, all of a good kind, are produced in plenty. And a wine is manufactured by the Armenians, at the town of Shahmachee,* which in flavor and substance, is not unlike the red wine of Bourdeaux; were the grapes carefully cultivated, and the process well understood, this wine would be much esteemed in Europe. The province of Shirwan has Derbent inclusively on the north; the Caspian sea on the east; the territory

* The former capital of that province.

of Aftara on the south; and parts of Georgia and the districts of Gunjah on the west.

OLD Shahmachee, the former capital, is situated about seventy miles inland of Baku, and for its trade, wealth, and population, was, after Ispahan, ranked among the most flourishing cities of Persia. To punish a rebellion, which the inhabitants had raised against the government of Nadir Shah, this city was rased and depopulated; but that the empire might not be deprived of a mart, so happily placed for foreign commerce, that prince formed about ten miles to the south-west of the old city, a new Shahmachee.* Fultah Ali Khan, the chief of Shirwan, resides generally at Derbent, but he gratifies a rapacious disposition, by making frequent circuits through the province, which he severely harrasses. The vicinity of general Potemkin's army has made him fearful of its nearer approach; and he is now endeavouring by every token of respect and acknowledged dependance, to obtain a favourable connection with the Russian empire.

HAVING laid before you, the more material part of my observations on Shirwan, I cannot resist the impulse of calling your notice, for a moment to the disposition and temper of a small

* An extensive trade of silk formerly was maintained between Shahmachee and the Black sea, through which channel, large quantities of that commodity were imported into Turkey, and thence into Europe. This trade though still existing is much diminished since the Russians, by obtaining the dominion of the Caspian, have made a monopoly of the Persian silk.

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but extraordinary portion of its present inhabitants. Human nature takes a portion of its prominent features from national prejudices, from education, and from government; nor must we exclude climate from its share of the formation. This remark arose from a view of the Atashghah at Baku, where a Hindoo is found so deeply tinctured with the enthusiasm of religion, that though his nerves be constitutionally of a tender texture, and his frame relaxed by age,* he will journey through hostile regions, from the Ganges to the Volga, to offer up a prayer at the shrine of his God.

WHEN the ambitious strides of the Russian empire, on the side of Turkey, by the late acquisitions of the Crim, are attentively considered, and its rapid progress into the most valuable provinces of Persia, we are compelled to bestow applause on the policy of a government which has so dextrously ordered its measures, that these valuable additions of power and wealth are daily accumulated without attracting the notice of Europe; nay almost without its knowledge. Waving any investigation of the political effects which may spring from the rise or fall, or the encreasing grandeur of nations, I will here only observe, that the influence acquired by Russia, in the north-west quarter of Persia, has been accompanied with reciprocal benefits, and that were it

* Among the Hindoos at the Atashghah, was an old man, a native of Dehli, who had visited all the celebrated temples of northern and southern India, and whom I afterwards saw at Astracan.

wholly annexed to the Russian dominion, the body of people would reap essential advantages; their persons and property would derive a security, of which they have been long deprived, and by a subjection to the orders of a civilized, active government, they would necessarily become useful subjects and profitable members of society.

THE kingdom of Persia, since the period of the Afghan Invasion,* has presented an unvaried scene of warfare and distraction; where every species of a savage rapine has been exercised with boundless sway; and at this day, Persia may be said to exhibit a vast tomb, piled up with the victims of ambition, avarice, and revenge; It were difficult to say whether more of its people in the last sixty years, have fallen in the field, or by the hand of the executioner and assassin. For they have had a full occupation, especially in the latter part of the government of Nadir Shah, whose revenues were at length drained from the blood of his subject.

THE cruelties committed by this prince have been diffusely treated; all classes of men, even our boys at school, are conversant in the barbarous exploits of Khuli Khan; it may not however be superfluous to notice some facts, which seem to have largely contributed to fully the memory of Nadir, who at one period of his life, maintained no ill founded claims to heroic fame. At

* Which happened about the year 1720.

the close of this prince's reign, his body and his mind indicated equal signs of disorder, which was supposed to have been caused or augmented by domestic treachery, and the effects of excessive fatigue.

CONSPIRACY and rebellion arose all around him, and he had no sooner quelled the insurrections of a province, than his departure was marked by the murder of the officers and successive revolts. Seeing his authority endlessly trampled on, and that partial punishment was inefficient to give it strength, he gave loose to a perhaps constitutional ferocity, which had been tempered by his understanding, but which these events inflamed to madness, and often instigated to the indiscriminate extirpation of a district. But what seemed most to embitter and disturb his mind, was the perfidy of his family; the defection of those from whom he had vainly expected aid and attachment. His favorite son and apparent successor, had been entrusted with the regency of Persia, during the expedition to Hindostan, and presuming on the distant occupations of his father, he had prepared measures, it is alledged, to ascend the throne.

THE increasing malady,* of Nadir, sharpened by public and domestic calamity, ultimately rendered him a monster of cruelty; and his rage extending usually to those, whose offices required

* An extreme colliveness.

an attendance on his person,* he was approached with a constant dread. Wearied out at length by the undeviating course of his tyranny and cruelties, which like a pestilence had thinned the land, some of the principal officers of the court, stimulated also, it is said, by one of his nephews, assassinated him in the month of April, 1747, while he was encamped in the northern quarter of Khorasan, not far distant from the place of his birth.

HAVING held out that side of Nadir's character which excites only disgust and horror, it were but simple justice to his memory, to notice those passages of his life which will place him in a light, where princes ever appear in the most grateful colours. On the event of his successes in India, he exempted his Persian dominion from all taxes, for the space of three years; and after discharging the military arrears, which amounted to four millions sterling, he gave the army a gratuity of six months pay, with a like sum to the civil servants of the camp.

AFTER the battle of Karnat, when Nadir had overthrown the empire of India, and possessed the person of the king, one of the Moghul omrah's represented to him, that among the Dehli troops were an hundred thousand horses fit for field service,

* It is said that the officers in waiting, instead of entering on the ordinary topics of a court, were used to make anxious and unfeigned enquiries into the state of the shah's body, and ever expressed much joy, at an imperial evacuation, which they imagined would secure an existence for the day.

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and which his order would immediatly produce. Nadir Shah, in the language of a prince, observed that he granted to the Moghul army, an unreserved quarter, which should not be infringed; that the bread of an Asiatic foldier depends on his horse, which were he deprived of, himself and his family would be reduced to beggary; that it is repugnant to humanity to treat those with rigor, whom fortune has thrown into our power, and it was his determined will, that the Indian foldiers should not be in any degree insulted or molested.*

NADIR SHAH, in the prosperous periods of his life, held out an ample protection to merchants of every sect and nation, and zealously fought to establish a liberal commerce throughout Persia, which he saw possessed of various valuable commodities. When the mercantile property of Mr. Hanway, was plundered at Asterabad, that gentleman preferred his complaint in person to the shah, who directing an investigation into the account, issued an effectual order on the governor of the province for a full restitution of the effects or the amount.

IN the vigorous attempts, which this prince made to introduce the European art of navigation and ship-building into his country; he evinced a genius rarely found in the mind of an Asiatic. It was his intention, by the assistance of John Elton, to erect fortified stations on the east side of the Caspian sea, that a stability

* Frazer's history of Nadir Shah.

might be given to his conquests in Khieva, and the Tartars checked in their depredations on the province of Astarabad. After Elton, had, with vast labor, completed the building of a vessel, in which he encountered obstinate difficulties, as well from a jealousy of the Persians of his rising favor with the shah as disgust at an irksome service; he was directed to examine the Tartar shore of the Caspian, and to make choice of an eligible situation for a settlement. But the coast, according to the report of Elton, being found destitute of good water, the design was relinquished.

NADIR SHAH, contrary to the general character of the Persians, who are impressed with a more persecuting spirit than any other Mahometan nation, gave a common toleration to the worship of the inhabitants, whether Christians, Hindoos, or Jews, and largely retrenched the power and wealth of the priests, who during the latter period of the Suffuee dynasty, had engrossed the chief direction of government. That Nadir might incapacitate their revenge for the death of the mollah Bashi,* who had been executed for refusing assent to a plan of this prince for introducing the Sooni religion into Persia, and to accommodate other salutary purposes, he demanded an account of the vast revenues which had been assigned to the church; they informed him, according to the tenor of Fraser's relation of this event, that their property was applied to the uses, for which it had been allotted; in salaries for

* High-priest.

the priests, in the maintenance of numerous colleges and mosques, in which prayers were incessantly offered up for the success of the arms of the prince, and of the prosperity of the Persian empire.

NADIR observed to them, that experience had manifested the inutility of their prayers, since for the space of fifty years past, the nation had been verging to decay, and ultimately had been reduced by invasions and rebellion to a state of ruin; when God's victorious instruments, pointing to his army, had come to its relief, and were now ready to sacrifice their lives to its defence and glory; that the wants of these poor priests, his soldiers, must be supplied, and he therefore determined that the greatest portion of the church lands should be appropriated to their use. The mandate being immediately carried into execution, produced a revenue equal to three million of sterling money. The priests, enraged at this assumption, exerted their utmost abilities in stirring up the army and the people against the shah; but the former being composed, in a large proportion, of the Sooni sect, ridiculed their situation, and the body of the inhabitants, when they considered that the edict would liberate them from a part of the general taxation, were not dissatisfied.

NADIR SHAH having accomplished this purpose, ordered the attendance of the chiefs of the people, and making a formal declaration of the measure which had been adopted, told them if they wanted priests, they must provide them at their own charge; that having himself little occasion for their services, he would not

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contribute to their maintenance. Such was Nadir Shah before calamity had harrassed his mind, and disease his body. The actions of men, however amply gifted by nature or improved by knowledge, are strongly shaped by the surrounding events of human life. Let the man whom we have but now viewed with admiration, towering down the tide of fortune with a swelling sail, and marking his progress by conspicuous marks of glory and renown, be thrown on the rough sea of trouble, without a shelter to cover him from its fury; or let him be stretched on the couch of sickness, helpless, and racked with pain, we shall speedily cease from wonder and applause, and with difficulty credit the identity of the object.

HAVING in detached pieces, and I fear with a wide deviation from order, described the most important events of the Persian empire, from the Afghan invasion to the death of Nadir Shah, I could have wished briefly to connect that epocha with the present period; but no document has come to my knowledge, sufficiently authentic or clear, for the illustration of the whole of this interval.

PREVIOUSLY to the administration of Kareem Khan, many competitors for the throne of Persia came forward, and encountered a various transient fortune, until all the race of Nadir, and the Sofis' were extirpated, except Shah Rock, the chief of Muschid, a sketch of whose life, has been already noticed. Kareem

reem Khan,* from a marauding horseman became the successful chieftain, and proclaiming himself the regent of the empire, during the minority of a descendant of the Sofi family, whom he pretended to have discovered, established his residence at Shiraz. It appears that Saadut Khan, the brother of the regent, took Bassorah † from the Turks after a year's siege; and during the Persian government of that place, Kareem Khan gave distinguished indulgencies to the English residents established there, whose factory and property, when the city fell into his possession, were fully secured to them. The administration of Kareem Khan, was involved in a series of hostilities against the Turks and Arabs, over whom, except the capture of Bassorah, he obtained but trivial advantages.

At the period of the regent's death, which happened about the year 1778, Saadut Khan was stationed with a small force at Bassorah, and solicitous of speedily reaching Shiraz, the theatre of action, he abandoned Bassorah, which again acknowledged the power of the Turks. When Saadut Khan approached Shiraz, he found the gates shut against him by a Zacchi Khan, a branch of his family, who seizing on the city, and the person of Kareem Khan's son, then a youth, an-

* He made no scruple of avowing, that in his youth he pursued the occupation of a robber, and that his foreteeth had been demolished by the kick of an afs, which he had stolen and was carrying off.

† This event happened in the year 1774.

nounced himself the ruler of southern Persia. The young man having evinced a disposition to favor the interests of his uncle; Zacchi Khan gave orders that he should be put to death. The sentence by a reverse in no rare practice at a Mahometan court, was executed on himself, and Saadut Khan was admitted into Shiraz, with a participation of the affairs of government. He soon formed a combination against his nephew, whom he ultimately deposed, on a charge of debauchery and a lavish expenditure of the public treasure.

DURING the administration of Kareem Khan, a body of troops had been sent to quell some insurrection, in a distant part of the country, under an Ali Morad, who returning successful, with an army disposed to promote his purposes, preferred a claim to the government; the issue of a civil war, prosecuted through a series of depredation, murder, and treachery, gave Ali Morad the possession of Shiraz, where he put to the sword, the whole family of Kareem Khan, with their adherents.* A Persian of Ispahan, speaking to me of the actions of Ali Morad, and extolling his military genius, said, that he possessed a scimeter of a large size and superior quality, on the blade of which were engraved the names of the twelve imaums, the directors of its edge, and the security of its victories.

* He was related to the family of Kareem Khan; it is said, that on this event, three hundred persons were massacred.

THE comment on the Mahometan's story, would in fact tell us, that whilst the sword of Ali Morad is thus patronised by his twelve saints, there is no service, however entangled by the ties of faith and honor, that he may not cut asunder with impunity, even with applause. Ali Morad, who has established the seat of his government at Ispahan, took Shiraz in 1778, or 1779, at which period, a gentleman of my acquaintance resided at Basforah, and has since communicated to me some tracts of the history of Kareem Khan, and of those chiefs who appeared in action after his death.

THIS gentleman whose veracity and discerning judgment may be confided in, draws a melancholy picture of the southern provinces of Persia. He says, that the intestine feuds and commotions gave a pretext for the perpetration of every crime disgraceful to human nature, and produced such daring acts of flagitiousness, that the people resembled demons rather than men. It was usual, he says, for one half of the inhabitants of a village, to keep watch at night, that they might not be murdered by the other, which if not equally vigilant became subject to a similar fate. But enough of this scene of blood, which degrades our race below the beasts of the field, and permit me in my desultory manner, to convey you again to the banks of the Caspian. It having been already noticed, that the dominion of this sea is vested without competition in the empire of Russia, which has also obtained a strong influence in some of the bordering

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provinces,

provinces, it may not be foreign to rational enquiry, to examine the stages by which Russia has arrived at this accession of power.

IN the year 1722, Peter the Great was solicited by Thamas Khan, the son of the Shah Hufseyn, to assist him in expelling the Afghans from Persia, who had driven his father from the throne, and continued to hold possession of an extensive portion of the kingdom; and to stimulate Russia to the grant of this aid, the Persian prince stipulated to cede in perpetuity the provinces of Ghilan and Shirwan. This proposal being acceded to, Peter, accompanied by the empress Katherine, embarked at Astracan with a large force, and proceeding along the west coast of the Caspian, landed at Agrechan, in the province of Mingrelia, about two hundred miles to the southward of the mouth of the Wolga; from thence he moved to the relief of Derbent, which had been besieged by the Afghans, and stationing a party of three hundred men in the castle, advanced a day's march into Persia; where he was met by the deputies of Baku, and Shahmachee who sought his protection against the Afghans, then making strenuous exertions to reduce these places.

PETER was preparing to undertake the service, when a Turkish envoy arrived in the camp, and represented, that his master having annexed Shahmachee to the Turkish dominion, was much displeased at the appearance of a Russian power in that quarter,

and

and that unless the emperor withdrew his forces, he was directed to declare war against Russia.

PETER having lately felt the superior strength of the Turks in the unfortunate campaign of Pruth, and being then in a foreign country, destitute of the resources necessary for commencing hostilities against so powerful an enemy, he consented to a peaceable return to his own dominions. The Turkish envoy accompanied the army to the northern limits of Persia, where he remained until it had embarked for Astracan. The party which had been lodged in the fort of Derbent did not join the army in its retreat, but at the solicitation of the inhabitants continued in that station, until the Russians at a future period appeared on the Caspian, while those of Baku deprived of the hope of succour, received a body of Afghan troops into the town, and submitted to the government of Ispahan.

THE Russians had constructed a small fort on the river Millu Kenti, in the territory of the Lesghi Tartars, and garrisoned it with five hundred men, who after the departure of the grand army, were attacked by a large Afghan force and wholly destroyed. Peter, it is said, lost in this expedition, a third part of his troops, by sickness, fatigue, and onsets of the Lesghis; a loss the more mortifying, as it was then attended by a subversion of the sanguine project he had formed, of extending his conquest into the interior provinces of Persia.

It appears that this event was followed in a short time, by
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an ultimate and formal convention, between the courts of Constantinople and Petersburg, which stipulated that Shahmachee, the territories of Armenia, Georgia, and Melitaner, should be held permanent appendages of the Port; and that Peter should be left at liberty to prosecute his designs on the provinces of Persia, bordering on the Caspian sea.

IN the latter end of the year 1722, the Persian chief of Ghilan deputed an agent to Astracan with powers to deliver up Reshd, the capital of the province, to a Russian garrison, should it be immediately dispatched to the relief of the city, then invested by the Afghans. The emperor assenting to the measure, dispatched by sea a thousand men to Ghilan, but on their arrival they were refused admittance by the inhabitants, who alarmed at the delay of the aid, and threatened with severe vengeance if they formed any connection with the Russian government, had entered into a negociation with the Afghan officer for the surrender of the city. The Russian detachment formed an entrenchment on the sea-shore, where it remained until a reinforcement of four thousand men came from Astracan, with orders to force an entrance into Reshd; but this service was not found necessary, for on the arrival of the additional force, the gates of Reshd were immediately thrown open, and the whole province of Ghilan became subject to Russia.

THE officer who commanded the auxiliary troops, had in his passage down the Caspian, touched at Baku, where he was directed

directed to lodge a garrison, conformably to a previous requisition of the Persian governor, but the succour arriving too late, the place had submitted to an Afghan army. Peter anxious to acquire so valuable an acquisition, dispatched in the course of the following year, 1723, a strong naval armament from Astracan, which entering the port of Baku,* took the fort after a short bombardment. It is said that previously to this siege, the Persians had never seen a mortar, and that when the Russian bomb-ketch was warped into its station, they ridiculed the attempt of so small a vessel preparing to attack the fort; but the destruction of the buildings, and the carnage which ensued, speedily converted their contempt into astonishment and fear.

THESE leading lines of the progress and establishment of the Russian power on the Caspian sea, are largely borrowed from the memoirs of a captain Bruce, who served in Peter's army during the first Persian expedition, and who seems to have made his observations with an accurate judgment; he has certainly related them with simplicity and candor. His documents also corresponding with the information which I collected in Persia, this sketch is laid before you with the greater confidence. From the period at which Peter fixed his power in the provinces of Shirvan and Ghilan, to the year 1732, when Nadir de-

* This word, I am informed, is composed of the Persian words, Bad and ku, signifying a windy hill; it is certain that a strong wind generally prevails at that place.

posed Shah Thamas, and assumed the diadem of Persia, it is not seen that any material occurrences interposed to disturb the Russian territory, or commerce on the Caspian. But when this meteor of the east had blazed forth, and in its course consumed or dismayed the surrounding nations, the Russians then involved in domestic commotion and intrigue, were compelled to evacuate their Caspian dominion, with only the permission to hold a resident at the sea-port of Enzillee, for the management of the Ghilan silk-trade.*

FULTAH ALI KHAN, having within these late years, engaged in a desultory warfare with the Lefghi Tartars, sought the assistance of the Russians, who after repelling the incursions of the enemy, held for some time possession of the fort of Derbent. It has been again restored; but the conditions are not known, though we may infer from the policy of the court of Petersburg, which is not in the habit of retrenching its limits, that the cause of withdrawing the garrison of Derbent, did not proceed from mere motives of liberality.

THAT your knowledge of this quarter of Persia may be more complete and satisfactory, I have been prompted to annex in this

* In the year 1746, an embassy was sent by the empress Elizabeth to Nadir Shah, a relation of which has been published by Mr. William Cooke, who accompanied it in the capacity of a surgeon; and at that time it appears that except the Enzille factory, and a commercial residency at Derbent, the Russians did not possess any establishment in Persia.

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place, a survey of the Caspian sea made by Captain Bruce, in the year, 1723, by the order of Peter, after his return from Persia. The relation of this survey is deficient in the detail of bearings, and often of the soundings, nor is it known whether these remarks were ever recorded, or have been omitted by the publisher; but the information is much wanted, for except the Russians, other nations are still trivially acquainted with the coasts of the Caspian sea; especially with that which confines Tartary.

CAPTAIN BRUCE says, " we received orders to go all round
" the Caspian sea to survey and sound it, and lay down in a
" chart all the rivers, creeks, and bays, with all the different
" soundings; and for this service, had one of the strongest new
" built galleys of forty oars, carrying two eighteen pounders in
" her prow, twenty four swivels, and three hundred men, at-
" tended with four boats, two of eight oars, one of ten, and
" another of twelve, each boat carrying one swivel gun; and
" two sub-engineers were appointed for my assistants.

" THE 18th of April 1723, went down to the mouth of
" the Volga,* and next morning proceeding from thence east-
" ward, we passed in very shallow water along the coast, so
" very overgrown with weeds, that we were obliged to keep at
" five or six miles distant from the shore, in from ten to twelve

* Forty miles below the city of Astracan.

“ feet water; and all the way, even for eight days time, we
 “ could find no place to land, even our smallest boats. We
 “ saw two little islands in the way, but we could not come
 “ at them for reeds, but we killed a great number of sea-fowl,
 “ that have their nests in these islands, and had plenty of fish
 “ and fowl, all the way. We sailed and rowed, as the wind
 “ permitted, but came to an anchor every evening that no-
 “ thing might escape our observation.

“ ON the 26th, we arrived at the river Jaick, the mouth of
 “ which is one hundred fathoms broad, and eighteen feet deep;
 “ we went to the town of Jaick, that stands about one mile
 “ up the river, which is well fortified, and has a strong gar-
 “ rison of Russians and Tartars,* to keep the Kalmuck and
 “ Nagayan Tartars in awe, and to prevent them from attack-
 “ ing each other, as they live in perpetual enmity.

“ THE Nagayans inhabit all the country from Astracan to
 “ the Jaick, all along the sea coast, being two hundred and fifty
 “ versts † in extent; and the Kalmucks possess that vast tract of
 “ land from Saratoff to the great desert of Beriket, and that
 “ tract to the south of the Jaick, all along the shore to the
 “ river Yembo, which is 93 versts from this place; we stayed

* The inhabitants of that tract of Tartary, which has been completely subdued by Russia and now a stationary people.

† At the common calculation of two thirds of a mile to a verst, this distance is 170 miles.

“ only one day, at Jaick,* and provided ourselves with fresh meat
“ and water.

“ BEING informed by the governor of the place, that there
“ was a large gulf to the eastward, extending to the river Yembo,
“ but too shallow to admit our galley. I sent one of our
“ engineers to go round and survey it, and join us again on
“ the opposite point, for which we proceeded immediately; and
“ sailing south, we anchored on the 30th, between the island
“ of Kulala and the point of the main, in six fathoms water,
“ in view of the mountains of Kanayan, and from whence we
“ had a clean and deep shore. At this place begin the ter-
“ ritories of the Turkistan and Turcomanian Tartars. During our
“ stay, waiting the return of the engineer, we laid in plenty
“ of wood and water, and diverted ourselves with fowling and
“ fishing; we caught here a Beluga of upwards of six yards
“ long and thick in proportion, from the roe of which we
“ made excellent caviar, which lasted us above a month.

“ OUR engineer with the boats joined us, on the 10th
“ of May, who reported that in the survey of the bay, he

* The Russians send annually, two or three barks from Astracan to Uir Gunge, a Turcoman mart, situated on this river, above the town of Jaick, whence in return for European commodities, as steel, bar-iron, and remnants of broad-cloth, they import furs, and salt fish. The Jaick continues frozen from the month of December to the middle of March, during which period, the Uir Gunge trade ceases; nor do the Tartars, who are chiefly merchants of Bochara, and Samur Kund, reside at that place, after the departure of the Russian vessels. — GEORGE FORSTER.

“ found only from five to eight feet water; that the whole
“ shore was so covered with reeds, that they could only land
“ at the mouth of the river Yembo, which was both broad
“ and deep. We left the island of Kulala, on the 11th, on
“ our way to the gulf of Iskander, where we arrived on the
“ 26th; all along this coast there is a great depth of water, so
“ that we could land with our galley on any part of it.

“ A GREAT number of small rivers fall into the sea from
“ the mountains, but we could not learn their names although
“ I attempted to get information, by sending the twelve oared
“ boat with an officer and twenty four men, and an interpreter
“ to speak to the people on shore; but they no sooner came
“ near enough, than the Tartars let fly a volley of arrows at
“ our people, who returned the salute with a discharge of their
“ musquetry at them; and we fired one of our great guns from
“ the galley at them, which made them retire to the mountains
“ in good haste. They always appeared in great parties, on
“ horseback, and well armed, and we saw several of their hords
“ or camps at a great distance, from which they move at plea-
“ sure, and wander from place to place, for those Tartars have
“ no settled abode; they continued to attend us every day in great
“ parties, to watch our motions, out of the reach of our guns,
“ and they disappeared entirely on our arrival in the gulf of Is-
“ kander, which is one hundred and eighty four versts from the
“ island of Kulala. In this gulf which is thirty versts in length
“ and

“ and eighteen broad, we found near the shore from five to six
“ fathoms water, with a clear ground and exceeding good an-
“ chorage.”

ON the 10th of April, the vessel in which I had embarked, sailed for Baku, and coasting the north-east head-land of the bay, anchored at Abshhorah,* a roadstead on a rocky shore, at which place most of the passengers came on board. The Armenians and Greeks had remained to celebrate the Easter-festival at Baku, where they have been permitted to erect a small chapel. The Persians of Shirwan, whether, from a frequent intercourse with the Greeks, who introduce much wealth into their country, or from a dread of the Russian power, shew a less dislike to the Christians than those of the eastern provinces.†

NOT being considered a staunch member of the faith, or thought to possess a sufficient sanctity of manners, I was not invited to assist at the conclusion of the Easter-fast. But, much against my will, I became a partaker of it on board the vessel. On the morning of Easter-sunday, long before break of day, the whole ship's crew, from the master to the cook, rushed tumultuously into the cabin, where I was asleep, and bellowed out their prayers to the figures of the virgin, and their patron, Saint

* A Persian compound word, signifying salt water.

† A society of Persians, of the Sooni faith, is established at Shahmachee, and its neighbourhood, who are governed by a chief of their own tribe, a proprietor of certain districts held in Feu of Futtah Ali Khan.

Nicholas, for the speedy deliverance of Christ from the grave, which as soon as was supposed to be effected, they saluted each other by a kiss, saying "Christ has risen."

DURING the fervor of this occupation, I was wholly overlooked and trampled on. They did not however neglect me in the more substantial part of the festival; for though in bed, they placed near me a large pudding stuffed with meat, which they earnestly desired me to eat; observing that as I must have incurred a severe restraint during their rigorous lent, it was now necessary to regale and be merry. They themselves implicitly conformed to the advice; and from the extraordinary quantity of flesh meat which they hastily devoured, during these holidays, it seemed that they eat as much for the purpose of compensating lost time, as the gratification of appetite.

ON the 13th of April, every person and every parcel that could possibly find a place being embarked, the vessel sailed, passing between a small island of rocks and the main. On looking around, I was amazed at the crowd of passengers, and the lumber that was scattered on the deck and suspended from the sides. I could not have thought it possible for such a space to contain so much matter. The lodging allotted to me, admitted scantily of my length, and of lying only on one side; but I was fortunate in an interior station, which saved me from being trod on by the other passengers, over whom lay my common path. When placed at the same board with a Russian, an Armenian, a Greek,

a Greek, and a Persian, I used to investigate with a pleasing curiosity the cause which had linked in the bonds of society, five persons of different nations, manners, and prejudices. The union was manifestly formed by self-interest, which when refined by a knowledge of the world, induces men to seek profit and pleasure through various channels, and in the pursuit, which is eager and vigorous, many are prompted to break down the strongest fences which education or superstition can plant.

ON the evening of the 20th, having seen two fishing-boats which marked the vicinity of the Astracan shore, our bark came to an anchor in three fathom water, but no land in sight. In the evening the wind began to blow with violence, and raised the sea; which in the Caspian is soon agitated, having a short irregular motion and breaking with great force. I had not been long in bed, when the Greek gentleman expressed an apprehension that the vessel was touching the ground, which was soon verified by a rough shock of the rudder. A scene of confusion, marked with various tokens of distress now ensued. Some were bawling out in the Russian, the Armenian and in the Persian language, while others were lamenting their fate in Greek and Turkish.

HAD I not been so essentially interested in the event, which bore a very unpromising aspect, the diversity of modes adapted in expressing a sense of this disaster, would have afforded matter of curious notice. Every man was imploring the divine interposition.

terposition in his own manner and language; but my attention was chiefly attracted by a Persian who had taken refuge in the cabin, a place he imagined of the more safety, from the master having taken his station there. In a piteous tone, he begged that I would accommodate him with a pillow, that he might compose himself, and await his last hour with resignation; amidst his ejaculations which were loud and fervent, he did not once mention the name of Mahomet. The whole force of his prayers were levelled at Ali, on whom he bestowed every title that could denote sanctity, or military prowess; he called on him by the name of the Friend of God, the Lord of the faithful and the Brandisher of the invincible sword, to look down on his servant, and shield him from the impending evil; thinking also to obtain the more grace with the father, he would occasionally launch out into the praises of his two sons.*

THE bales of silk, with which the cabin was filled to half its height, being removed forward, the vessel which struck only at the stern, was for a time relieved; but the wind and sea increasing, our danger became imminent. I proposed to the Greek, to throw over some part of the cargoe, as the best mode of saving the rest, as also our lives; and he was disposed to try the expedient, had he not been obstructed by the passengers, who bitterly inveighed against the proposal, and the adventuring Fe-

* Huffin and Hufseyn.

ringhee its author, who having nothing to lose, they said, was little interested in the issue. Yet I can with truth aver, that in no situation of difficulty in which I have been occasionally involved, did I ever feel a stronger reluctance of quitting the "warm precincts of day;" I could not with adequate fortitude reconcile the idea of being lost on a shore, which I had so long fought with labor and anxiety, and which I had approached only to meet destruction. But that I might not be taken wholly unprepared I secured about my person the journal of my route, the only article of property which was in the least valuable.

HAVING obtained the Greek's consent to cut away some heavy lumber which hung from that quarter, and greatly contributed to augment the force of the vessel's striking the ground; I began to throw into the sea empty casks, tubs, and baskets of fruit; and was proceeding briskly in the work, when I was driven from my post by a strong party of the proprietors.

ON the 22d, before noon, the wind having abated a little, the crew were enabled, though with difficulty, to hoist out the boat, which was out of all proportion, large and heavy; nor did the vessel ever touch the ground after being disburthened of this mass.

ON the 23d, at anchor, the wind moderate but contrary. The vessel remained nearly in the same place until the 28th, when many fishing boats came in sight; not less I imagine, than one hundred; and some of them visiting us, we purchased

at the rate of a shilling a piece excellent sturgeon, the roes of which, stripped of the filaments and sprinkled with salt, without any other preparation, is the common food of the Russians, and of which I have eat heartily. This when dried, is called in Europe, the caviar, and produces a profitable traffick to the city of Astracan. The sturgeon fishery is chiefly conducted by Kalmuck Tartars, who find a ready sale for their fish, at numerous factories, established by the Russians, on the lower parts of the Volga, for the purpose of salting sturgeon and preparing the caviar.

HAVING understood that the Kalmucks were a migrating people, consisting wholly of shepherds and soldiers, who derived a subsistence from their broods of cattle, and marauding expeditions, I was surprized at seeing them occupied in a marine profession. But many thousands of the Kalmuck race are scattered about the northern coast of the Caspian, where in small narrow boats, worked by four or five persons, they are engaged in the sturgeon fishery during the summer months. They often continue many successive days at sea, the water* of which they drink. And they eat in its raw state part of the produce of their labors.

THERE is not perhaps on the face of the earth, a human creature

* At the distance of fifteen and twenty leagues from the north shore of the Caspian, the water freshened by the large rivers flowing into it from that quarter, may be drunk without prejudice; it being only brackish, when the wind blows strong from the southward.

who lives on coarser fare, or to a civilized people more disgusting than a Kalmuck Tartar; not even the savages of southern Africa. Putrid fish raw, or the flesh of carrion, horses, oxen, and camels, is the ordinary food of Kalmucks; and they are more active and less susceptible of the inclemency of weather, than any race of men I have ever seen. The features of a Kalmuck, though coarser, bear a striking resemblance to those of a Chinese; the upper part of his nose is scarcely seen to project from the face, and its extremity is furnished with widely dilated nostrils.

BEING anxious to leave the ship whose provisions were nearly consumed, and which from the crowd and filth of the passengers, had become very offensive, I hired in conjunction with the Greek gentleman, a Kalmuck boat to go to Astracan. But before I quit the subject of the vessel, I must mention to you that we brought from Baku five Hindoos; two of them were merchants of Moultan and three were mendicants, a father, his son, and a Sunyassie.* The last was a hale, spirited young man, who impelled by an equal alertness in mind and body, blended also with a strong tincture of fanaticism, was making, it may be termed, the tour of the world; for he did not seem to hold it a matter of much concern whither his course was directed, provided he was in motion.

* The name of a religious sect of Hindoos, chiefly of the Bramin tribe.

THE Hindoos at Baku had supplied his little wants, and recommended him to their agents in Russia, whence he said, he would like to proceed with me to England. The Moultee Hindoos were going to Astracan on a commercial adventure merely, and would not have gone a mile out of the road to have served God or man. When I accused the Hindoos of polluting themselves by drinking the cask-water, and preparing victuals in the ship-kitchen, they observed, that they had already become impure by crossing the forbidden river,* beyond which all discrimination of tribes ceased. Though spirituous liquors are prohibited to the Hindoos, it does not appear that the use of bang, an intoxicating weed which resembles the hemp in Europe, and is prepared either for smoking or a draught, is considered even by the most rigid, a breach of the law, for they drink it without reserve, and often to excess.

IN the evening of the 28th of April, four of us embarked in one of the Kalmuck boats, rowed by four stout men, who directing a course for the Astracan channel, proceeded at the rate of five miles an hour, over very smooth water; we reached before night a small inhabited island, about twenty five miles distant from the vessel; and as the Kalmucks were fatigued with hard work, it was agreed to go on shore for a few hours to give them a respite. I landed with joy on the territory of

* The Attoc. — *N. B.* The verses of the Emperor to the Hindoo Rajah.

Russia ; and you who have now perused the story of my long, laborious journey, will see reason, without the aid of figurative enlargement, for the pleasure I felt. The inhabitants of the island, who were agents of the sturgeon fishery, received us with cordiality, and when apprized of the Greek gentleman's rank in the service, treated him with much respect. In a wooden house, cleanly furnished in the European manner, which to me was a rare object, we were entertained with a dish of sturgeon in broth, good bread, and pure water. Excuse the sensuality of my description ; but I must give way to an impulse of joy at the remembrance of that delicious meal. It was personally served up by our host, who agreeably, to the ancient custom of Russia waited at table, and performed all the offices of assiduous hospitality.

AT the conclusion of the repast, in which the Kalmucks had subsequently shared, we proceeded on our journey, and leaving John's Island * on the left, the lights of which were seen, entered the Astracan branch of the Volga. About midnight the boatmen became so much harrassed by the labor of the oar, at which they probably had been employed all the preceding day, that it was found necessary to refresh them with a little sleep, of which I was also in great need. Having only a space to sit

* Called also Chattiree Bougarree. It stands at the mouth of the Astracan channel, and is furnished with a light-house.

on with my legs bent under me, the position had long been very painful, and no sooner did the boat touch ground, than leaping out, I spread my cloak on the ground, and slept soundly three hours. At day light we commenced our journey, which led among numerous low islands, covered with reeds, and about eight o'clock in the morning, arrived at a station called the Brand Wacht, about twelve miles within John's Island, where a marine guard is posted for the protection of the custom house, and enforcing the occasional observance of quarantine. It was fortunate that I had procured a written testimony of my situation from the captain of the frigate at Baku, without which I must have awaited the orders of the Astracan government. We discharged the Kalmucks at the Brand Wacht, and hired an eight oared boat, the property of Turkoman Tartars,* who were clothed like Russian seamen, and very expert in the management of the oar.

THE Turkoman subjects of Russia, are an industrious quiet people, and have become useful subjects to the state. Many of them serve in the navy and army, where they are received without objection to their religious tenets, which are less intemperate, than those of any other of the western Mahometans. Few villages are seen on the borders of this branch of the Volga; the land, nearly

* The descendants of those Tartars, who were in possession of Astracan, when it was subdued in 1552, by the Czar, Ivan Basilivitz, surnamed the Tyrant.

level with the water, is thickly covered with reeds, affording a commodious shelter to numerous flocks of wild geese, which seem to have resorted thither from all quarters of the globe; nor could they have chosen a fitter place; it is equally secluded from the haunts of men and animals, defended by a strong cover, and abundantly supplied with fresh water.

WHEN we arrived in sight of the great church of Astracan, which with the other spires and high buildings of that city, present a beautiful vista to a long reach of the Volga, my Greek friend arose, and making the sign of the cross on his body, offered up, with an unaffected decent devotion, a prayer of thanksgiving for his safe return to his country; and I trust that I shall not incur your censure for having adopted his manner and example. Forms are the least important part of our duty, and the observance of this, I held a necessary respect for the religious worship of a man who had rendered me essential offices of humanity.

ON our arrival at his house, which stands on the bank of the river, I requested leave to retire to a separate apartment until my person should undergo a purification, which had now become urgently necessary, and some European apparel provided. This warm hearted Greek would not listen to the proposal, but seizing my arm, forcibly dragged me into the room, where his wife, a pretty young woman, and some gentlemen of the place were assembled. He introduced me to the company, by the name of Signor Georgio, and in a few words, recounted to them the heads of my story.

Though

Though I was clad in an ordinary Persian dress, had a rough beard, and a very weather-beaten face, not one of them seemed to notice the uncouth appearance, but by kind and polite congratulations, took every occasion to dispel my evident embarrassment. I soon went to bed, where I must have been overpowered by a strong sleep; for the Greek told me in the morning, that he had made repeated attempts to awaken me, fearing that his house would have been consumed by a fire, which had broke out with violence in the neighbourhood. My host insisted on furnishing me with clothing out of his own wardrobe, observing that my short stay at Astracan, would not admit of a new equipment; an Armenian gentleman, who came to welcome the Greek's arrival, proposed to introduce me to the officer, commanding the Caspian squadron, and to one of my countrymen, a lieutenant in the Russian navy.

THE commodore,* who spoke the English language very intelligibly, received us with much politeness, and sent a servant to inform Mr. Long, the English gentleman, of my arrival. The connection which I formed with my countryman, who was of a friendly and chearful disposition, rendered my stay at Astracan, very pleasant; and having little other occupation there, than that of a spectator, you will necessarily suppose, that I ought to give some description of this quarter of Russia; but

* Peter Hannicoff, a knight of one of the military orders.

the subject has already been so amply investigated by writers of almost every European nation, that had even my residence enabled me to undertake the discussion, little remains to be described.

It is seen in the history of Russia, that the Czar, Ivan Basilovitz, having in the year 1552, conquered the Tartar kingdom of Casan, he turned his arms against the Nogay Tartars of Astracan, and subdued their country, the capital of which he took by assault, and strengthened it by a new fortification in the Asiatic manner. The space which the territory of Astracan occupies on the face of the globe is so peculiarly marked, that it enforces the notice of every observer. On the east and south-east, it is skirted by a wild extensive desert, reaching to the habitable quarters of Tranfoxonian Tartary; on the south, it hath the barren shores of the Caspian sea; on the south-east, a desert of three or four hundred miles, extending to Circassia, which is only supplied at two places with fresh water; and on the west, another spacious waste divides it from the Black sea.

On these dreary plains, little other vestige of humanity is seen than thinly scattered hords of roving Tartars, whose rude and savage life but increases the horror of the scene; and, as if the kinder powers of nature had been destroyed, or arrested by some malignant influence, not a shrub or blade of grass is to be seen on many of these plains that is not tainted with noxious qualities. To the north and north-east, the province of Astracan is bounded by Russia Proper, and Cazan, on which

side also a wide tract of barren land is interposed. The island on which Astracan stands, as well as its dependant territory, produces no grain, and though so deeply surrounded by deserts, no quarter of the Russian dominions is more abundantly supplied with this provision. The country to the westward and southward of Astracan, produces a natural salt of an excellent quality for domestic uses, which is transported from thence to remote parts of the empire, chiefly by water carriage.* The flourishing state of the province of Astracan, hath also been largely promoted by its fisheries on the Volga and the Caspian sea, where the fish are procured and salted at a cheap rate, and the sale is very extensive.

A BRISK traffick has long subsisted between Astracan and the Tartars of Bochara and Khieva, who in return for their curious furs and lambskins, purchase a variety of European commodities. Yet the natural advantages of Astracan would yield but a small portion of their benefits, did not the Volga furnish the means of a secure and commodious conveyance. This river, which has a course of not less than two thousand British miles, takes its rise from a lake of the same name, in the province of No-

* Saltpetre, though not in large quantities, is found in the vicinity of Astracan, which, according to Cooke, is taken out of the earth, and macerated for some time in water; then they draw it off, and by adding foot and some quick lime, evaporate the water, and make as good saltpetre as can be made any where. See tracts of Mr. William Cooke, Surgeon.

vogorod, latitude 57, longitude east 51, and after skirting numerous cities and mercantile towns, falls into the Caspian sea, forty miles below Astracan. In this course, it receives many rivers and lesser streams, which spreading to the eastward, form a navigable communication throughout that wide space of country, lying between Siberia and the Dnieper.

By the Occa which receives the river Mosca and joins the Volga, at the city of Nijnio Novogorod, large boats pass from Astracan to the old capital; and by a canal which unites the Volga with the Msta, a river ultimately flowing into the Ladoga lake, the source of the Neva, an inland navigation is completely opened between the Caspian and the Baltic seas. From the level face of the country, the current * of the Volga has little force, and will admit of boats being warped against it, at the rate of three miles an hour.† The city of Astracan is supposed to contain about eighty thousand inhabitants. Exclusive of the Russians, there is a numerous colony of Nagayan Tartars, (the ancient people of the country), many Greeks, Armenians, and Circassians, some itinerant Persians, and a small society of Hindoos.

In the life of Timur Beg, translated from the Persian by M. Petit de la Croix, Astracan is denominated Hadji Terkan, one of the principal cities of the kingdom of Kapchac, which Ti-

* It runs about one and a half, and two miles per hour.

† For a description of the manner in which these boats are worked, see Hanway's and Bruce's travels.

mur, when he penetrated into that quarter of Tartary, took and destroyed. This prince detached also a part of his army further up the Volga to Serai,* the capital of Kapchac, which was plundered and reduced to ashes. In the history of Timur, I find a passage relative to Russia, which for the curious information it conveys, deserves a distinct notice.

TIMUR, in the pursuit of a vanquished enemy, arrived at the river Dnieper, which leaving on the left, he crossed the Don, and entered the dominion of Russia. The author, in the English translation, says, “ our soldiers pursued him as far as
 “ Corason, the present Koresh, a town of Grand Russia, which
 “ they entirely pillaged. They over-run all the great kingdom of
 “ Muscovy and Ourous-dgic, or Little Russia, where they took
 “ prodigious droves of cattle, and abundance of women, and girls
 “ of all ages, and of an extraordinary beauty and shape. Then
 “ Timur went in person to the city of Moscow, the capital of
 “ Grand Russia, which his soldiers plundered, as they had done
 “ all the neighbouring places dependant on it, defeating and cutting in pieces the governors and princes. The Russians and
 “ Muscovites never beheld their kingdom in so bad a condition ;
 “ their plains being covered with dead bodies. The army enriched themselves with whatever they could find in this vast
 “ country, as ingots of gold, silver blades, great quantities of

* An Asiatic word signifying residence.

“ antioch ;

“antioch; very much esteemed cloth, wove in Russia with a great
“deal of skill and nicety; vast numbers of fables, black as jet,
“and ermins, with which every person in the army was suf-
“ficiently furnished, both for his own and his childrens lives;
“as likewise skins of vacash, grey and white, spotted like tygers
“skins. They also brought away many skins of grey and red
“foxes, and an infinite number of young colts which had not
“been shod. It would be tedious to give a detail of all the
“booty they obtained in this great country.”

WHAT an immense scope did the conquests and invasions of Timur embrace. His arms were seen victorious on the Ganges, and his banners flying on the confines of the Baltic sea! yet, view the scene of the present day, and you will behold the great empire, which he founded, mouldered into dust. Russia which had felt the force of the destructive Tartar, and was but yesterday drawn out of barbarism and reduced into form, hath already taken ample vengeance* for the disgrace she then suffered; and in the probable revolution of events, promises to complete the work which has been so successfully begun.

DURING the flourishing state of Persia and Turkey, when these powers were enabled to restrain the Russian empire within its proper limit, Astracan was considered an important frontier. But

* The imperial family of Turkey is of the Tartar race.

since the decay of the Persian monarchy, the independance of Georgia, and the cession of the Crimea by the Turks, who in this surrender have proclaimed their weakness and pusillanimity to the world; and since the Tartars who were scattered over the eastern and western sides of the Volga, have been either compelled to desert their haunts, or submit to the Russian power, this province no longer forms the boundary of the empire. The government of Astracan, is now directed by a system wholly civil and commercial, and the garrison consists of about fifteen hundred men, who have more the appearance of militia than regular troops, and are conspicuously deficient in military order.

In this city, which occupies a mediate situation between Asia and Europe, there is perhaps a more diversified assemblage of nations, than on any other spot on the globe, and a more liberal display of toleration; you see the Greek, Lutheran, and Roman churches, mingled with the Mahometan mosque and Hindoo pagoda, and the different sectaries united by the bonds of a common social compact. The largest portion of the industry and adventure which supports the commerce of Astracan, is contributed by the Armenians, who are the proprietors of most of the Caspian vessels, and the chief conductors of the Persian trade. By their pliant manners but more by their wealth, which has supplied the means of securing the favor of government, the Armenians have acquired a distinguished influence

fluence and respect in this province. Where they exhibit a cumbrous luxury and splendor; and generally adopt the Russian manners. It evidently appears that the extensive encouragement given to these people, has conduced to introduce much wealth and commercial emulation into this part of the empire.

THE Hindoos also enjoy at Astracan very fair indulgence; nor could they in the most celebrated places of worship in India, perform their rites with more freedom. They are not stationary residents, nor do they keep any of their females in this city; but after accumulating a certain property they return to India, and are succeeded by other adventurers. Being a mercantile sect of their nation, and occupied in a desultory species of traffick, they have neglected to preserve any record of their first settlement, and subsequent progress in this quarter of Russia; nor is the fact ascertained with any accuracy by the natives of Astracan. In the karavansera allotted to them, which is commodious and detached, they make their ablutions and offer up their prayers, without attracting even the curiosity of the Christians; and they do not fail to gratefully contrast so temperate a conduct with that of Persia, where their religion, persons, and property, are equally exposed to the attacks of bigotry and avarice.

MANIFEST proofs were daily presented to me of the benefits conferred by the Volga on Astracan, and the southern quarters of the province, which though productive of no grain, and but little

little pasturage, are amply supplied with provisions,* from the vicinity of Czaritsin, and even from Casan, though at the distance of one thousand miles. A grand testimony of the uses of this river, which is formed on common notice, is seen in the immediate construction of the city of Astracan, which, though not a tree grows in the province, except in gardens, is chiefly composed of wooden houses; numerous vessels are also built in the docks, and vast quantity of fuel is consumed by the inhabitants. All this timber is floated down the Volga, or imported in boats from the upper countries.

DURING my short stay at Astracan, I daily visited the marine yard, where I received much pleasure in viewing the progress which the Russians have made in all the degrees of naval architecture, since the time of Peter. The squadron now in force for the protection of the Caspian trade, and aving such of the bordering states as may be hostile to the designs of Russia, consists of five frigates† of twenty guns, one bomb-ketch and some tenders. Out of this amount, two frigates with the bomb-ketch are at Astracan, one at sea, and two on the passage from Casan. These vessels on account of the shallows at the mouth of the Volga, are constructed on a broad bottom, and draw only eight or nine feet water. An extensive marine yard

* Wheat bread, bore the price of one and a half farthing per pound, and beef of three farthings per pound.

† Six pounders.

has been within this late years established at Casan, where the abundant produce of oak timber, and other necessary materials, with the advantage of the river, have pointed out the conveniency of building the hulls of the vessels destined for the Caspian service. The Russians have introduced into their navy, many of the Dutch principles and regulations, which it is probable were adopted by Peter, subsequently to his residence in Holland, and by the naval officers which he invited from that Country. Some French ordinances relative to the rank and duty of officers, are also introduced, but it is not seen that their system has received any improvement from the marine of England.

THE Russian seamen, in addition to their diet and clothes, receive nine rubles* per annum, and as an inducement to prefer the naval service, they are supplied with a daily ration of flesh provisions; an allowance not granted to the army, though it is also furnished with diet† by the government. The Caspian squadron at this period, acts ultimately under the orders of General Potemkin, whose army is stationed between the Caspian and the Black-sea. A part of this force has been lately detached into Georgia, the territory of Prince Heraclius,‡ a Christian chief, who in the last war between the Russians and the Turks, withdrew his allegiance from the Porte.

* A ruble amounts to about four shillings and three pence.

† Consisting of rye-bread, and salt only.

‡ He is denominated by the Asiatics, Heracly Khan.

SINCE the accession of the Crimea to Russia, the empress hath held out an avowed protection to Heraclius, who is now declared an independant prince; and it appears that an officer of the court has been deputed to present him, in the imperial name, with a crown of gold, and the title of King of Georgia.* By this act of policy, which involved no danger or charge, hath the aspiring monarch of Russia, secured an useful ally, and established on the side of Georgia a substantial barrier against the natural enemies of her state. The other potentates of Europe, are in the usage of presenting their portraits, some curious animal, perhaps, or patents of nobility to their allies and favorites; but a commanding fortune has enabled Catharine to bestow on her friends,† crowns and kingdoms. It may be said that Russia holds the supremacy of Georgia, and it is probable that at the death of the prince, a period which his advanced age places at no remote distance, the succession will be arranged in the manner most accordant with the policy of the court of Petersburg.

AN occurrence befel me on the day previously to my departure from Astracan, which from a curious fact which it disclosed, may not be unworthy of your notice. Whilst I was looking at some passages of Hanway's travels in Mr. Long's apart-

* An ancient name, I understand, of Georgia.

† Count Poniatousky and Heraclius.

ment, a Russian gentleman came in, who perceiving that I was a foreigner, and from some broken words which I spoke, probably an Englishman, he addressed me with fluency in my own language; the book in my hand, which he observed, belonged to him, had great merit, and that he was himself well acquainted with many of the events recorded in it. Without ceremony he entered into a general discussion of the history of Persia, from the period of Hanway's conclusion to the present time, and treated the subject with much apparent accuracy.

THIS gentleman of the name of Marcke, had held the rank of Brigadier General, in the Russian service, and for some years directed the affairs of the Russian factory at Ghilan. But, on a charge of oppressing some Armenian merchants, he was dismissed from the service, and mulcted in the whole amount of his property. Mr. Marcke concluded his observations on Persia, by noticing, that the Captain Elton, who has been already mentioned, married an Armenian woman in Ghilan, and his daughter, the issue of that marriage, was now residing at Astracan. Intelligence, he said, had been received, that an estate or legacy had been bequeathed to Elton, during his supposed residence in Persia, and that if such property had really devolved on him, no one possessed a fairer claim to it than his daughter, who could ascertain the legitimacy of her birth, and who now a widow, encumbered with many children, was reduced to extreme

indigence.* It would be an act of charity, he added, to make an enquiry on my arrival in England into the truth of this intelligence, and endeavour to obtain some provision for a distressed family. Noticing in me a more than ordinary concern for the misfortunes of this woman and the fate of her father, he said, that if I saw her, I should be enabled to represent her situation with more corroborating facts. He objected to the proposal of my going to her house, apprehending from her manner of life, that the visit would be incommodious; but went himself and conducted her to Mr. Long's lodgings. She was a little woman about forty years of age, had from some accident become lame, and was accompanied by a son.

SOME years ago she had been induced to undertake a journey to Petersburg, for the purpose of establishing her claims, and had reached Moscow; where some Armenians residing in that city, diverted her intention, which they represented as fruitless without greater aids than she possessed. The honest warmth with which Mr. Marcke espoused the cause of this forlorn widow, attracted me forcibly to him; and the pleasure which I suppose he received at observing the like disposition in a stranger, whom he was about to part with, probably for ever, incited him

* General Marcke says that in a short time after the death of Nadir Shah, Elton was either assassinated, by the hand, or the order of the father of the present chief of Ghilan.

to communicate many events of his life, which were related in a manner peculiarly animated and pathetic.

It appeared that he was a native of the Ukraine, and had been early employed as secretary to the Russian embassy, at the court of London, where, and at Petersburg, he formed many connections with our nation, to one of whom, I think he said, his sister had been married. He had served likewise in the corps of engineers, where I have since understood, he acquired the reputation of an officer of ability, and formed a friendship with the present governor of Astracan, who now renders him many offices of kindness. After occupying various stations in the service of Russia, he was appointed to the direction of the Ghilan factory, whence he had been removed at the instigation of the Armenians, who, he said, persecuted him with uncommon marks of malignity. His property was confiscated, and he received the sentence of banishment to Siberia, which was afterwards commuted to a close residence at Astracan. His deportment evinced an unaffected resignation to the lot which had befallen him; nor was it devoid of a manly exertion of spirit. In a tone of simple humility, but strengthened by an eye which impressed irresistible conviction, he affirmed, that in the condition which fortune had placed him, he experienced a large portion of content. He had given a wide scope, he said, to the impulse of ambition, and had gratified it by the aid of instruments he now beheld with horror and disgust; but adversity had at once extinguished every
tumul-

tumultuous affection, and endowed him with fortitude, and the sober enjoyment of reason.

HAVING made the necessary preparation for my journey, and obtained a passport, with an order for post horses,* I was ready on the 10th of May, to leave Astracan; and here it is incumbent on me, to express cordial thanks for the hospitality and kindness shewn me by the gentlemen of that city, especially to the honest Greek, Ivan Andreitch, whose treatment of me, from the day he took me up at Baku, to my departure from Astracan, was undeviatingly generous and affectionate. Nor must I omit the good offices of Mr. Hannicoff, who expeditiously procured the necessary papers from the public office, and gave me letters of introduction to Count Zchernichoff, the marine minister, and to Admiral Greig.

MR. LONG's goodness to me was manifold; it anticipated all my wants, and indeed, by an anxious attention to my welfare, increased them; whether in furnishing a store of provisions, as there are few houses of fare on the road, or in fortifying my travelling conveyance,† against the casualties of a long journey. The journey from Astracan to Petersburg, having been

* This instrument is termed *Pedrozchna*, without which no persons can be supplied with post horses, the hire of which is fixed by government, at the rate of two copeaks, about a penny, for each horse, per verst.

† A four wheeled carriage, called in the Russian language, a *Kibitka*. It is fixed on the axles without springs, and is six feet long, and four feet in breadth, of the form of a

been quickly run over, and without a knowledge of the language, you will necessarily suppose that my observations were limited and trivial. To qualify some of the difficulties which lay in my way, Mr. Hannicoff furnished me with a list of the stages and their distances, which prevented the common imposition of post houses, and afforded me amusement.

ON the 12th of May, at midnight, having travelled two hundred and fifty-eight miles, and two thirds, I arrived at Czaritsin, where I was detained until the next morning, that my passport might be examined by the commandant. This gentleman perceiving the embarrassment which arose from my want of the Russian language, entered with much good-nature into the story of my little requisitions, and speedily accommodated them; though at the time he was much oppressed by sickness.

THE country to Czaritsin is level and thinly inhabited; yet its abundant herbage, shewed the soil to be of a good quality. The garrison of this fortress, which is independant of Astracan, consists of three or four thousand men. Since the frontier of Russia has been extended on the south-west, by the complete subjection of the Cuban Tartars, and the acquisition of the Crimea, this station is not considered of much military account.

of a cradle; about a third part of it, towards the head, is covered with a tilt of painted canvas, from the fore edge of which to the foot, a leather covering is occasionally fixed in a sloping direction, as a shelter against the weather; this machine is supplied with a bedding, and contains also, the requisite baggage of the passenger.

FROM

FROM the western bank of the Volga, and near the fort of Czaritsin, a chain of redoubts of about forty miles in length, strengthened by an intrenchment, extends to the river Don; but which, from the like cause that has diminished the importance of Czaritsin, is now of little utility, and has been evacuated. It is said, that the empress occasionally expresses a disposition to open a channel between the two rivers; a design which had been undertaken by the great Peter, but frustrated by the unsuccessful issue of the Turkish war, as well as certain difficulties which attended the operation.*

THE ground occupying this space, which I examined, is chiefly composed of gravel or rock, and apparently little higher than the level of the rivers. By opening this passage, an inland navigation would be effected from the Black-sea to Siberia, by the medium of the river Kamah, which rises in that province, and falls into the Volga, about forty miles below the city of Cazan; and the Russian marine, now established on the Black-sea,† which has long been a favourite object at Petersburg, would receive from this communication a supply of commodities, the most essential to its support; as timber, iron, cordage and canvas. Such a passage into the Euxine and Mediteranean seas, from a country yielding

* The soil was found in many places to be mixed with a large portion of rock; and the officer, an Englishman, who conducted the plan, was cut off by banditti.

† The port of Kerson.

a produce so various and valuable, may create a revolution equally important in the commercial and political world; and enable Russia, now indebted to foreign nations for the maintenance of her trade, to found within herself a mart, whose happy situation is empowered to attract to a common centre the commerce of Asia and Europe.

THE Day on which I left Czaritsin, the road led along the southern bank of the Don, which was wholly uninhabited; its current seemed to run at the rate of one mile and a half an hour, and the breadth to be about three hundred yards. No occurrence of any moment befel me from Czaritsin to Choperfkoy Kreport,* a distance of two hundred and thirty-five miles and a quarter; unless it be noted, that so far from encountering any impediment, I received a general civility and assistance. When you advert to the predicament in which I stood, a stranger, alone, and unacquainted with the speech of the country, you must yield a due portion of praise to the excellency of the government, and the disposition of the people.

FROM Czaritsin extends a tract of uncultivated land, of more than one hundred miles, in the direction of the road, on which no other habitation appears than huts, for the accommodation of those who keep the post horses; but it shews no other testimony of

Kreport in the Russian language, signifies a fort.

a desert than the want of inhabitants; for the soil bears an exuberant herbage, and is not deficient in water.

AT the distance of a few miles from Choperskoy, the driver* of the carriage alarmed me by a report of the hinder axle being shattered; an accident which gave me an opportunity of observing the dexterity of a Russian carpenter in the use of the axe. Without the help of any other tool, except a narrow chisel, to cut a space in the centre of it for receiving an iron bar which supports the axle, and to pierce holes for the linch pins, he reduced in two hours a piece of gross timber to the requisite form, and his charge was one shilling.

TRAVELLING one hundred and twenty miles from this place, I arrived at the city of Tanboff, not large, but populous, and generally well built, the residence of a governor, who examined and put his signature to my passport. The country was level, bearing little wood, and from Astracan to this place I had not seen a stone on its surface. A heavy rain fell during the night of my departure from Tanboff, which caused an overflowing of the adjacent brooks, in one of which the carriage sunk so deep, that the horses with every effort could not drag it, though strenuously assisted by the driver. This trivial event should not have been intruded on you, did it not tend to delineate the character of a Russian peasant.

* He sits on a low seat, fixed on the fore axle.

AFTER trying various methods to extricate the carriage in vain, and without a murmur, though the weather was piercingly cold, and he was dripping wet, he loosened the horses, and yoking them to the hinder part of the carriage, he brought it backwards to dry ground. He endeavoured to pass at another place, and was again foiled; yet he preserved an evenness of temper, which I did not think our nature possessed. He did not cease a moment from applying such aids as were best adapted to our relief; nor once shrunk from a chilling wind and rain, which had thrown me into an ague; but severe patience, and an indurance of the roughest inclemency of weather, are qualities with which the peasant of Russia is constitutionally endowed. Whilst we were struggling against this difficulty, which seemed to me remediless, a passenger leading some horses, saw the embarrassment, and cheerfully yoking two of them to the carriage gave us speedy relief.

ON the 20th of May, arrived at Moscow, distant from Tانبoff three hundred and eighty-four miles and one third. From the Volga to this city, I had not seen any land so much elevated as to merit the name of a hill, and but few stones on the ground. The buildings in Russia, with an exception of some of the public structures, and houses of the principal people, are composed of wood, which is so abundant a commodity, that in many places it forms the streets of towns and villages.

IN the interior parts of the country, a few of the churches

have lately been built of brick, in modern architecture, and shew a just taste; but the old ones are all of wood, heavy ill shaped fabricks, and hung around with bells of all sizes, which the priests, who seem peculiarly fond of their sound, keep in perpetual chime.

AT every halting-place, I must again notice, the people treated me with invariable civility; inviting me into their houses during the change of horses, and supplying, at a moderate rate, the things which I wanted. The roads in Russia, during the dry season, are in a good condition naturally; for little labor is bestowed on them; which indeed from the large tracts of intervening wastes would be impracticable. On some days when the horses were strong, I have travelled from one hundred and twenty, to one hundred and thirty miles, over a country on which the eye could perceive no elevation. The intervening rivers I either passed on floating bridges or ferry boats, there being no fixed bridge on the road from Astracan to this city.

ON approaching Moscow, its numerous and lofty spires* shooting through extensive plantations, exhibit a view equally picturesque and magnificent. The gardens interspersed through this city, have given it a more extensive site than is requisite to contain, perhaps, three times the number of its inhabitants, who are computed at three or four hundred thousand.

* I was informed that the steeples in Moscow, amount to sixteen hundred.

THE driver of the carriage conducted me to a German hotel, whose manager, a very assiduous and obliging person, spoke the English language fluently, and though he had experienced a variety of fortunes, some of it very adverse, he had acquired but little knowledge of the world; that is, he was ill qualified to combat its iniquitous practices, or to derive an adequate profit from his profession. By a credulity and benevolence of disposition, he had fallen a prey to many of the foreign adventurers who infest Moscow, among whom I was mortified to see some of my own countrymen numbered.

THIS good, simple publican, being within my knowledge an unique in his profession, and as rare objects are the grand pursuit of modern journalists, I could not pass this character without introducing it to your notice; and I entreat, should you ever visit Moscow, that you will make search for this honest German, and after thanking him for his kindness to the Indian, say, that he was very imprudent in depositing a trust with a person whom he never saw before, nor could reasonably expect to see again.

DURING the day of my halt, my host did not fail to procure me a view of those curiosities, which most attract running travellers at this city, but which having been already minutely described, do not require further illustration. Yet I must make some mention of a bell, the largest probably in the world, and expressive of the inordinate passion of the Russian nation for this

this species of sonorous instrument. It is composed of various metals, even of gold, and silver; the height measures twenty-one feet, four inches and a quarter, the diameter at the base, twenty-two feet, four inches and three quarters; its weight, one hundred and ninety-eight tons, two hundred and twenty-eight pounds; and its cost is computed at sixty-five thousand, six hundred, and eighty-one pounds. A fire many years ago destroyed the building in which it was suspended, and falling to the ground, where it has since remained, a piece was broken from its side.

Moscow though no longer the capital of the empire, hath not felt those symptoms of decay, which are seen to follow the deprivation of sovereign residence. Aware of the attachment of the ancient nobility of Russia to this city, and also that her spacious dominion required a second capital, Katherine hath strenuously endeavoured to preserve its former importance; and the institutions which have been established, have centred, it is said, a greater portion of wealth and commerce in Moscow, than it possessed before the removal of the court.

THE superior kinds of Russian manufactures are chiefly fabricated in this city from the rough materials, and are transported by water carriage or caravans into the most distant quarters of the empire. An ordinance so salutary will essentially contribute to fix the prosperity of Moscow, which is also promoted by the residence of many of those Russian nobles, who are not employed in the immediate service of the state. They there indulge

dulge that gaiety, dissipation, and pomp, in which they so much delight, at a less expence than at the new capital.

MR. ZCHERNICHOFF, the governor-general of Moscow, has acquired in the administration of his office, a general good name, by the establishment of a vigorous police, and bestowing on the city many ornaments. Standing high in favor of the empress, whom his family had strongly aided in ascending the throne, his desires are considered as equal to those of the court; and it may be deemed equally conducive to the welfare of Moscow, as that of the nation at large, that a subject of such zeal and authority has been placed in so eminent a station. The character of Mr. Zchernichoff deserves the more distinguished notice, as a shameless laxity and corruption are seen to pervade every office and department of this wide empire, to counterpoise its powers and warp the direction of its natural policy.

MR. HANNICOFF having given me a letter to his brother at Moscow, I went to this gentleman's house, where, with much mortification, I saw every thing French. The furniture, the dress of the family, its manners, and the preceptor of the children were all French. The Russian gentry, indeed, from whatever other quarter they have drawn science and literature, have received a large portion of their manners from France; and it is evidently seen, that a connection cemented by so strong a partiality, has occasionally attracted Russia, from its constitutional bias, and infused a spirit of policy inimical to its welfare. The prevalent

prevalent use of the French language and manners in most of the European courts, is not to be accounted the least efficient instrument employed by France, in conducting that general system of intrigue, which marks every measure of her government however trivial.

I WAS received by the deputy-governor of Moscow, to whom I applied for his signature to my passport, in a manner little different from that of an Asiatic chief to his dependent or inferior. He had just risen from his siesta, and was sitting dressed in a loose robe on a sofa of silk, in the front of which I was directed to stand. He asked me some questions on the subject of my journey with more affability than I had expected from his appearance, and the glitter of shew, which surrounded him. It is to be noticed that the Russians of all ranks are of a fallow and brown complexion; few of them, even when young, having a natural bloom of face; this defect I am induced to attribute partially to the excessive warmth of their stoves, and a frequent use of the hot bath, which in Russia contains a more intense heat than I have experienced in any country.

AFTER dining with my German host, whose attentions to me had been indefatigable, and his charge moderate, I left Moscow on the 20th of May; on the next morning I arrived at the town of Klin, and breakfasted with an acquaintance of my Moscow friend. This person, a German, many of whom are scattered over this part of the country, kept an inn, but he said
with

with little success ; as the Russian gentlemen, in their journies, seldom frequent such houses, and the other classes of people are withheld by their poverty.

THE road from Moscow to Peterburgh, measuring four hundred and sixty-nine miles and a third, consists generally of a morass, and is constructed, with some interventions of solid ground, of spars of fir, laid in a parallel direction, and strewed over with earth ; this work was performed by Peter I. for establishing a more easy communication between the interior provinces and his new capital. This extensive wooden causeway, founded on so unsubstantial a basis, must at the first sight excite our surprize ; but it will in a great degree cease, when it is considered that Russia abounds in timber, in robust vassals, and that the great Peter conducted the operation. My carriage, fixed immediately upon the axles, shook me so violently in its progress over this rough road, that I slept very little until the evening before I reached Peterburgh, when being overpowered with fatigue, I lay down on a bed at a post-house, desiring the driver to call me at the expiration of two hours, but no one came near me till the morning.

ON the 25th of May, I entered Peterburgh, and procured a commodious lodging at an English tavern. Mr. Shairpe, the British consul, being informed of my story, invited me to his house ; and his introduction to many of the English gentlemen, at Peterburgh, enabled me to pass very pleasantly, a three weeks residence

there; he presented me also to our ambassador,* whose favourable mention of me in England, was essentially conducive to my welfare.

IN so transient a visitor, it would be a manifest presumption to give any detailed account of this splendid city, or to describe its constitution or laws. I will, however, notice such matter, as its more immediate projection forces on ordinary observation. The view of Petersburg, adorned with its numerous magnificent buildings, intersected by spacious and regular streets, imparts the consequent pleasure of beholding a beautiful object; but when I looked on the period, removed only at the distance of seventy years, when this spot, now covered by a proud city, resorted to by all the nations of the European world, and enriched by an active commerce, was a dreary morass, affording a miserable residence to a hord of rude fishermen. I was inspired with reverence and wonder, when I reflected on the creative genius of the man who had accomplished so glorious a work. Other monarchs have modelled armies, aggrandised kingdoms by conquest, or gradual civilization; but Peter at once dispelled the cloud of barbarism, which enveloped his country, and brought it forth to the astonished and applauding view of Europe.

It is on this ground you must view Petersburg, to render due justice to the memory of its founder, who in rearing his fa-

* Mr. Fitzherbert.

bric, struggled with obstinate prejudice and enraged superstition; but they fell before his commanding genius. Nor must we forget that thirst of knowledge, which carried him into foreign countries to court their science, and practise their arts. This subject hath insensibly produced a strain of writing, too strongly I fear impregnated with that species of colouring, which marks the composition of the Asiatics, and indeed their ordinary conversation, and which, by an intimate connection with them for many years, has perhaps become habitual to me. When you advert therefore to the societies I have mixed in, and also to a warm impulse, which has prompted me to throw a laurel at the brow of Peter, I hope that this effervescence of style will meet with an indulgent eye.

FROM the dresses of the nobility, enriched by a various display of jewels, their equipage and pompous retinue, the court of Peterburgh is said to be the most brilliant in Europe; and it should seem, that the empress manifestly indulges * this disposition in the courtiers, whether from the congenial propensity of a female mind, or an opinion, that the intrigues and machinations which she has heretofore successfully practised, will not deeply occupy the minds of a people, involved in luxury and dissipation.

THE Russian gentry, especially those attached to the court,

* She has established at Peterburgh, four companies of players, of different nations, French, German, Italian and Russian, which receive salaries from the public treasury.

are either in debt, or they expend the full amount of their revenue; and if the testimony of those who have made the experiment is to be credited, we must believe in the extreme venality of the ministers of government, however adverse to the public welfare. The administration of count Panin gave a strong proof of this disposition. The French who have ever avowedly opposed the views of this empire, have afforded without reserve, assistance to its enemies, and who, it is said, restricted its Mediterranean squadron, to eight ships of the line, possessed during Panin's ministry, a leading sway in the Russian cabinet, which they rendered hostile to the general interests of the empire. Since that period, Russia has adopted a more natural policy, and is aware of the salutary expediency of forming a cordial intercourse with the court of London. It is noticed that the Russian gentry learn foreign languages with appetite, that they readily assume the manners of those whom they visit, and lay them aside with equal facility; and that being a new people, they bear few marks of national originality; but like a mass of ductile matter, receive the impression of objects in contact with them.

THE peasantry are marked with strong characteristic features; they are obedient, attached to their superiors, and possess an obstinate courage; but they are addicted to petty thefts, and to an excessive use of intoxicating liquors. It must surely be held a reproach on the policy and finance of a nation, when the largest
branch

branch of its revenue is seen to arise from an encouragement of the ruling vice of the people; yet this fact is fully exemplified in Russia, where two capital imposts are laid on corn-brandy. It is sold by government to the dealers, at a fixed rate, from which a large profit is produced, and a duty is collected from every person, who vends it.

WHATEVER censure the present Katherine may have incurred in swerving from the cardinal virtue of her sex, we must unreservedly say, that she hath made some atonement for that deviation, by establishing a wise and vigorous system of government, by a liberal encouragement of the arts, and an exercise of humanity to her subjects, meriting the example of the most polished nations. She possesses a munificence, which has much endeared her to the people, and which an occasion of displaying happened some days before my arrival at Petersburg. Being informed that an extensive pile of wooden buildings, appropriated to the use of merchants and tradesmen, was burning with violence, she immediately proceeded to the spot, where exhorting the firemen to an active execution of their duty, she assured those who had suffered by the conflagration, that the buildings should be reconstructed at the public expence and of more substantial materials.

AMONG the many monuments of grandeur, raised by Katherine, the most attracting is an equestrian statue, erected to the memory of the great Peter, which is placed in front of the council-

council-house, and in a situation commanding a view of the port; nor have I seen any figure which exhibits a bolder or more just aspect of nature, except that of our first Charles in London. It stands on a high block of stone, whose summit slanting, gives an ascending position to the horse, one of the hinder feet of which bruises the head of a serpent.* The figure of Peter looks towards the Neva, having the right arm stretched forth with an expanded hand, giving to all nations encouragement and protection. Often did I visit this statue of Peter, and in reviewing the stupendous work, which his hand has raised, I have gazed on it with admiration and delight; and did the tenets of my faith permit, Peter should be chosen my tutelar saint.

PAUL PETROWITZ, entitled the Grand Duke of Russia, and the only issue of the empress, having been little brought forward to the public notice, the essential parts of his character remain undeveloped. The foreigners who have access to him, say, that he is endowed with discretion, is beloved in his family, and observes a just punctuality in the discharge of his accounts, a quality the more deserving of praise, as it is rarely found among the nobility of Russia, who have become notorious by an accumulation of debts and a common failure of payments.

* Emblematical of the malignant prejudices, which this prince encountered and overcome.

The grand duke is the nominal president of the admiralty, though he does not officiate in that department, or possess any influence in the cabinet; but aware of the empress's jealousy of domestic interference, he lives wholly abstracted from business.

A GENTLEMAN, who had acquired a conversant knowledge of the court of Petersburg, observed to me that a female reign was most favorable to the views of the Russian nobility; it afforded a wider scope, to their ambition, avarice, and intrigue, which under the eye of a prince, especially if he were active, would necessarily be limited, and that they would ever dislike and strive to exclude a male succession; nor does this observation want proofs of support, in the four last reigns of this empire.

In closing these desultory remarks, I am induced to notice, that those Russians who have not yet adopted the manners and dress of Europe, and they probably include three fourths of the nation, resemble the Asiatics, and particularly Tartars, in many conspicuous instances. They wear the long gown, the sash, and the cap; and they consider the beard as a type of personal honor. The hot bath as in Asia is in common use, even with the lowest classes of the Russians, who perform also many ordinary ablutions, not practised by any northern people, and when not prevented by their occupations, they sleep at noon. In the manner of Asia, the Russians observe to their superiors an extreme

treme submission, and their deportment is blended with a suavity of address and language, which is not warranted by their appearance, or the opinions generally formed of them.

By imposing a superior value on this quality, the Russians, it should seem, have neglected to cultivate the more essential virtues, a want of which is often experienced by the foreign merchants, who have incurred heavy losses by their want of faith. The copeck of Russia, a copper coin, in name, and apparently in value is the same which was current in Tartary during the reign of Timur; and as the passage illustrating this fact is curious, I will lay it before you.

“THE dearth was so great in the Tartar camp, that a
“pound of millet sold for seventy dinars copeghi, an ox’s head
“for an hundred, and a sheep’s head for two hundred and fifty.”*

This occurrence happened during the expedition of Timur into Astracan, at a period of two hundred years previous to the Russian acquisition of that kingdom. Should a national connection between Russia and Tartary be ascertained, a reverse of the general progress of conquest, which has been seen to stretch to the southward, will appear exemplified in the Russian nation, who penetrating into the higher parts of Europe, have fixed a capital in the sixtieth degree of latitude. Embarking at

* Shirriff ud Dein’s History of Timur, translated by Petit de la Croix.

Peterburgh,

Petersburgh, in the middle of June, on board of a trading vessel, I arrived in England in the latter end of July.

HAVING now brought you to the close of a long journey, the performance of which was chiefly derived from a vigorous health, and a certain portion of perseverance, I bid you an affectionate farewell, and I trust, that you will never have cause to impute to any of the various facts which have been brought forward in the body of the letters, the colour of passion or the views of interest. Amicus Plato, &c. The opinions deduced from them, given by a man slenderly conversant in the higher classes of science, and who has yet much to seek in the abstruser page of human life, I freely commit to your censure, as also the manner of writing, which I fear will be judged offensive to the chasteness, distinguishing the language of the present age.

F I N I S.

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F I N I S

Forster, George, -1792

<<A>> Journey From Bengal To England

Bd.: 2

London (1798)

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